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SPY

February 1994 Vol. 8 No. 4

L.A. O.K.!

NICOLE EGGERT
as That California Girl,
Bloodied but Unbowed

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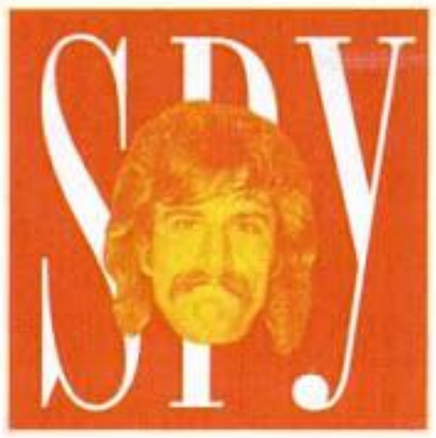
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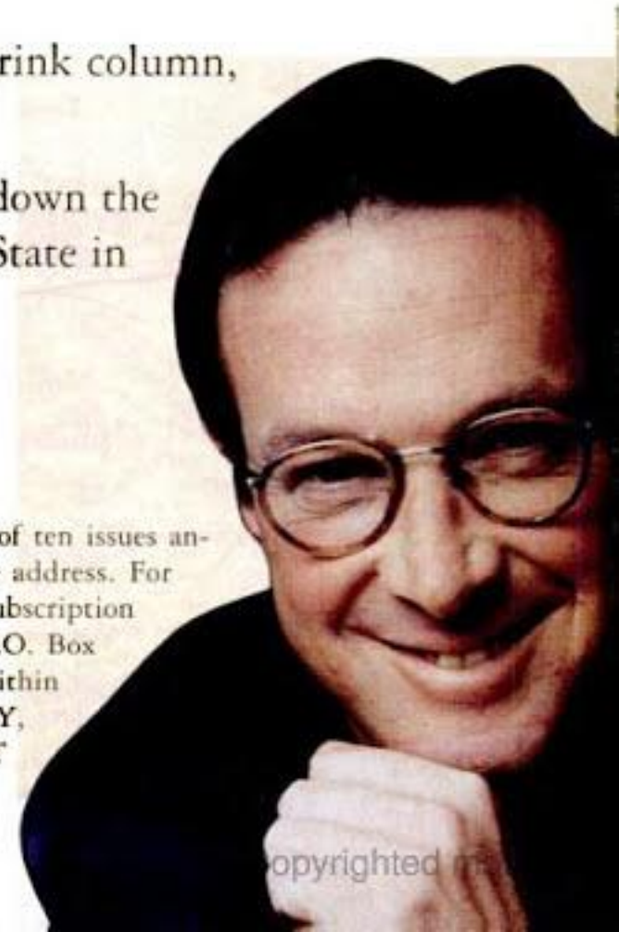
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Photographed by Bonnie Schiffman/Onyx. For more information, see page 71.

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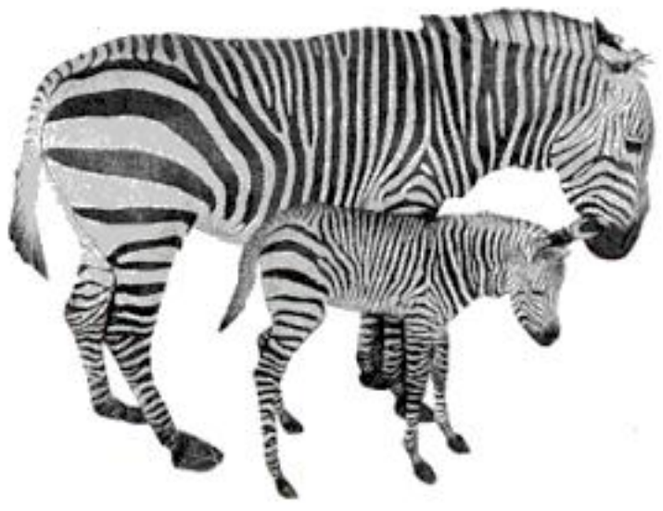
affluent, gracious, refined, environmentally sensitive, ethnically harmonious. To the south lies Los Angeles: vulgar, bursting with cupidity, violent, racist, ferociously noncerebral, ecologically flayed. Hideous. Farther to the south lies San Diego, which has a zoo.

Omnia California



Whenever a traveler from the East Coast announces that he is making a trip to California, he is expected to express revulsion if his business takes him to the cultural cesspool of Los Angeles but to leap into paroxysms of ecstasy should his business take him to the shining city on the hill where little cable cars run halfway to the stars. (Should he announce that his business is taking him to San Diego, people will usually tell him to visit the zoo.)

We hold no brief for, nor have any ax to grind against, the burgeoning municipality of San Diego; it certainly has a nice zoo. Yet on the question of San Francisco vs. Los Angeles, we feel compelled to advance a minority view and admit that we generally like L.A., while finding San Francisco a bit of a joke. It is our position that San Francisco, a quaint hamlet that has somehow confused itself with Byzantium, has long benefited from an uninterrupted stream of booster-spawned propaganda that has hornswoggled the American public. Consequently they believe that what is basically a glorified Austin, a slightly less nippy Ann Arbor, a boho Vancouver, a New Hope writ large or a seismi-



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cally suspect Charlottesville is actually a first-tier municipality, one that can take its place alongside such world-class North American cities as New York, Chicago, Boston, New Orleans, Montreal and, of course, Los Angeles. Frankly, we find this idea quite ludicrous. In our view, San Francisco is Quebec with more Chinese restaurants.

In attacking San Francisco's self-manufactured image as a West Coast Athens, let us begin with the outright lies and work our way down to the obvious half-truths. Exhibit A: the widely repeated falsehood that an active intellectual life flourishes in the City by the Bay. This barefaced mendacity is contradicted by the existence of the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *San Francisco Examiner*, two of the most farcical, inconsequential newspapers in the United States. To be a world-class city, a municipality must be serviced by a *Times*, a *Globe* or, at the very least, a *Figaro*. Even decaying, second-echelon cities such as Philadelphia, Cleveland and Baltimore can boast of the Pulitzer-laden *Inquirer*, the respected *Plain Dealer* and the diligent *Sun*. San Francisco, by contrast, has two putrid, fish-wrapping implements that cannot seriously compete, in terms of pure journalistic excellence, with the *Richmond Times-Dispatch*.

Meanwhile, a few hundred miles to the south, Los Angeles has the *Times*, one of the best newspapers in the country. If there is no intellectual life in southern California, then why does it have so great a newspaper, whereas, in the Alexandria of the redwood country, a putatively sophisticated citizenry makes do by reading the daily ruminations of the addled Herb Caen? The answer: There is no intellectual life in San Francisco. There never has been.

But is there *cultural* life? So they say, but the evidence is hard to find. Does San Francisco have a symphony orchestra? Yes, but you can't name its conductor (hint: first name, Herbert) and you haven't the faintest idea where it gives its concerts. In Los Angeles, by comparison, such luminaries as Carlo Maria Giulini and Zubin Mehta have at one time headed the Los Angeles Philharmonic, and the ensemble's concerts at the Hollywood Bowl are legendary. Does San Francisco have a major art museum that can compete with, say, the Getty Museum? Don't think so. Where, then, is the cultural life that is supposed to be flourishing in San Francisco? In its derivative, smoke-free restaurants? In its little cable cars that run halfway to the stars? Or in its movie houses, where haughty aesthetes view movies such as *Citizen Kane* and *Blade Runner* and *Sullivan's Travels*, which were made in...Los Angeles?

Ah, but what about San Francisco's legendary *ambience?* What about the aura of ethnic harmony that reigns in the City of St. Francis? Well, let's be honest here and admit that San Francisco is Arcadian and relatively safe. But that's because, years ago, it shipped all its problems across the bay to Oakland. Determined to turn itself into a city that exists for no other reason than to be pretty, San Francisco has banished everyone who isn't presentable—the poor, the homeless, anyone who can't spell *caffè latte*—to the smoldering junk heap across the water. Why, New York City could pull the same stunt by cutting loose the Bronx and parts of Brooklyn, but then chambers of commerce all across America would cry out, "Cheaters! Cheaters! For shame!" The ugly truth is, the charm of San Francisco is inversely proportional to the squalor and gloom of Oakland.

That's why we're so unabashed about our enthusiasm for the City of Angels. Whatever its failings, Los Angeles is a recognizably American metropolis that reflects the values, aspirations and fears of the American people. San Francisco, by contrast, is consistently *wrong* about practically everything, whether it's politics, art or the importance of body piercing. People are fond of accusing New York of being out of touch with the heartland. But when it comes to being in the mainstream of American values, San Francisco makes New York look like Hays, Kansas.

San Franciscans ridicule Los Angeles as a tasteless, sybaritic hellhole where everyone who is anyone drives a red Maserati and dates, or is, a blond bimbo. Precisely. We love L.A. because it is what it is, and what it is is what the rest of us secretly are, or were, or want to be. *Hey, who's kidding who?* Los Angeles expresses the bedrock values of this society: money, sex, more money, lunch, more sex and more money. We love it.

We love L.A. because it is always on the cutting edge. While San Francisco was producing the encephalitic Grateful Dead and the pharmacological Jefferson Airplane, Los Angeles was producing the only truly great American rock band: the Doors. (You think the French will ever bury the Dead in Père-Lachaise?) While San Francisco was producing the appalling Gregory Corso, Los Angeles was producing the splendid John Gregory Dunne. While San Francisco was producing the twee Armistead Maupin, Los Angeles was producing the caustic James Ellroy. While San Francisco was producing bland superstar Joe Montana, Los Angeles was producing radiant superstar Magic Johnson. And James Worthy. And Kareem.

We love L.A. because it is Jack Nicholson, not Jack Casady; Andy Garcia, not Jerry Garcia; Phil Spector, not Phil Lesh. We love L.A. because it is Grace Kelly, not Grace Slick; *Jaws*, not Fisherman's Wharf. We love L.A. because it is Hollywood, not redwood; Tony Perkins, not Tony Bennett; *Love Me Tender*, not the Tenderloin. Last but not least, we love L.A. because we hate San Francisco.

—*Joe Queenan*

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Letters to SPY

From the SPY Mailroom



We who work in the frenetic whirligig of New York publishing have a little rule: If something happens three times, it's a trend; if it happens four times, it's a groundswell; and if it happens five times, it's time for Lance Morrow to haul out *Bartlett's* and write an elegiac think piece about it for *Time*.

This handy little maxim is, sadly, of no help when it comes to the 48 identical letters we received from 48 different people in the Washington, D.C., area in response to Kevin Zimmerman's Music column (November). "Kevin Zimmerman's article, 'Glock Around the Clock,' made some valid points in regard to the entertainment industry's long-standing exploitation of violence," the letters all began. "As a law-abiding citizen interested in gun rights, I am angry about the slant of the news and entertainment industries in regards to firearms legislation." Our 48 like-minded correspondents went on to tout the wonders of something called the Law Enforcement Alliance of America, "an organization of law-enforcement officers who know the futility of passing more gun laws." We called the Law Enforcement Alliance of America—an organization based, oddly enough, in the Washington, D.C., area—just to quell our illogical suspicion that it had played some role in having these letters sent to our offices. "It's the first I've heard of it," said Ted Gogol, the editor of the LEAA's quarterly magazine. "And I would know." That's good enough for us, and unless you don't know the futility of passing more gun laws, it ought to be good enough for you too. In the meantime, we've filed the 48 letters (or *les maudits quarante-huit*, as they're called by our French Canadian intern, who had to open all 48 envelopes) in the KRAZY KOINCIDENCE file and moved on to nominally more pressing matters. ▶

Sex and Gore

First off, let me say that I haven't been this turned on by cartoon babes since Betty and Veronica went surfing ["Those Surprising Gore Girls," November 1993]. That said, this is the second time that you have printed cartoon drawings of those fabulous Gore girls. While I appreciate it, believe me, Sarah, Kristin and Karenna are beautiful, sexy and *real*! How about some actual photographs of them for a change? Do me a favor; I'm dyin' over here.

Gregory Poirier
Los Angeles, California

Does anyone else now feel in need of a delousing?

Cover Charge

I was appalled at the November cover, with Daryl Hannah as Mrs. JFK Jr. This has got to be the most distasteful photo, and it is a shame she would even consider doing such a cover. I wonder what the Kennedys think of her now! Obviously she does not and will never have half the class that Jackie has.

Jill Cartwright
Durham, North Carolina

The Squirrel Can't Help It

Your article about celebrity activists ["Cause Celebs," by Carol Vinzant, November] hit the squirrel on the head. Hollywooders have become obsessed with environmentalism in recent years for the simple reason that the beneficiaries never turn critic. While the poor, the unemployed and the drug-ridden have been known to curse on occasion their famous wannabe benefactors for being patronizing, self-important, interfering, nouveau riche twits of low intellectual order, no yew tree or snail darter has ever been so ungrateful. Being green in Hollywood is a cost-effective, unconditionally guaranteed way to gain more elevated social and political status without ever getting picketed, boycotted or otherwise unnecessarily inconvenienced.

Michael Silverstein
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Your feature on celebrity activism points out once again that just because these people are famous and have access to the public doesn't mean they know jack shit about anything. The fact of the matter is that Babs and her celebrity ilk are for the most part underinformed and disingenuous, or are simply having their emotions exploited by those with political agendas. And to think these people have access to the president!

Bill Webster
Reedsburg, Wisconsin

Reason Not the Greed

Kudos to you for your recent exposé on the greed and filth of the 1980s ["Are You Better Off Now Than You Were Ten Years Ago?," October]. It's about time somebody called attention to this avarice that consumed the upper class and caused them to ignore God in the search for happiness. I especially enjoyed the photo essay ["In Search of Arrogance," by Joe Queenan], particularly the "portable" computer.

Jason Bailey
Seattle, Washington

Thank you, Jason! We're proud to report that our highly innovative characterization of the 1980s as a time of greed has had a wide influence—not least of all on Walter Mondale's 1984 presidential campaign.

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First among these is the dilemma faced by one Lydia Rebac of Evanston, Illinois. "I read SPY for the first time the other day and liked the magazine a lot," she writes. "But as a financially challenged college student and Generation Xer, I cannot afford a subscription." After coyly noting that *Ms.* gives free subscriptions to certain disadvantaged women, Lydia cuts right to the chase: "So what do you say? May I bum a couple of SPYS off you guys?" Unfortunately, she snuffs a simple, cost-effective solution to her problem when she adds in a postscript, "Please do not suggest that I read *Ms.* instead, as that would surely kill me." All right, Lydia. We don't want any more blood on our hands—not after last summer's SPY Festival at Giants Stadium, when, as you'll remember, what was supposed to be a carefree afternoon of SPY writers' reading from their work turned into a generation-scarring tragedy. (Festival seating—what were we thinking?)

George B. Sofranko Jr. of Canfield, Ohio, was the Grand Prize winner in the recent A&M Records/SPY "Increase Your Paranoia and Win" promotional contest, and he doesn't care who knows it. "Today I received my prize," he informs us gleefully, "a Philips DCC 130 portable DCC player. Many thanks!!!" It's only a few more paragraphs, however, before Sofranko admits that for all his good fortune, he still isn't satisfied. "Does this mean I get my name in the magazine? If so, you can also put down that I've been job-hunting for several years now, with no real success—I'm an attorney (Ohio and Florida licensed). Résumé available upon request!!" No real success? We have a feeling that's going to change in a hurry, George. A recent survey of our readers in Dayton, Akron, Jacksonville and Tampa reveals that the two things they most seek in a lawyer are (1) ownership of a bitchin' sound system and (2) a willingness to use exclamation points with crazed abandon.

In stark contrast to Sofranko's irritation with the ways of an imperfect world, a writer identifying himself only as Mike the Parking Attendant ▸

Great job with your review of the 1980s. I especially enjoyed Larry Doyle's "The Fat Years: Highlights from a Historical Highpoint," with its inclusion of significant movies of the era—*The Winds of War*, *Beverly Hills Cop* and *Lost in America*. However, I was disappointed that Doyle didn't include the best example of Reaganomics cinema, the 1984 blockbuster *Ghostbusters*. A plot synopsis reveals how perfectly it crystallized the ideas of the 1980s:

A crew of ne'er-do-well scientists fester in the public sector, where there is no incentive for them to be productive. When budget cuts cost them their jobs, they realize they have to start their own company to survive. By luck and pluck, they find a niche in the market, providing a service that is sorely needed. After their company begins to show a profit, the first thing they do is hire a member of a minority. Disaster occurs when an arrogant representative of the EPA overregulates their business, but our heroes ridicule his unmanliness, ignore the regulations, save the day and get the girl.

And the most telling plot point—eventually all the main characters end up covered in slime.

Daniel Maley
Macon, Georgia

Ghostbusters *also hints at the* nineties: *A foreigner (Rick Moranis) gets the best job (Keymaster).*

As far as I can tell at this point, SPY is the first to give what has to be the most neglected and ignored era ever the second look that we all so badly need to give it. I appreciate all the effort you put into steering clear of all stereotypes and guilty verdicts so commonly involved in the pieces dealing with this subject. The timing of your issue is also to be commended, for as those gearing up to purvey a new line of nostalgia make their final preparations, I believe it is of extreme importance that we not let this become another cheap exercise in self-mockery and degradation. It was harmless enough to let the 1970s go down like that, but when the day comes when we have no more yesterdays to fuel our tomorrows, who will remember that Dirk wore white sox? I believe a lot of people out there who engage in 1980s-bashing are afraid to admit that never since the halcyon daze of the 1979–83 era have they experienced as much happiness and satiation. It's a cop-out of the highest order to blame the good time on the available funds alone. Sure, it made it all happen, like watering a garden, but let's face it, the money was there for a reason. It was the final assault on rationality, Communist Russia (do you think the USSR would be gone today if *Pravda* had featured the technical equivalent of *Penthouse* pictorials, i.e., Comrade of the Month?), dissent (via trivialization) and moderation. When the media engages in 1980s-bashing, it is usually to tap into public sentiment for achieving their own ends. I believe the ultimate revolutionary act of our time now is to embrace the spirit of completeness and good-timeness that was the 1980s. I propose we all enter into this next phase of nostalgia with the intention of residing for a long time, at least long enough so that the next thing we do comes without looking back.

Randy Simpson
Paramount, California

Randy, you present a compelling argument for the rationing of stationery.

Other Voices, Other Letters

After reading your October issue, I was shocked to see that the Playfair orientation program was not just a temporary aberration at my alma mater (Loyola College of Baltimore) but an insidious organization that has spread its mindless tentacles throughout the entire academic community ["SPY's 1993 College Guide & Dead-Language Primer"]. Your short report on the organization did not do it justice. The program treated students like infants and trained them to respond to authoritarian commands no matter how senseless. It publicly stripped us of our dignity and then attempted to rebuild it,

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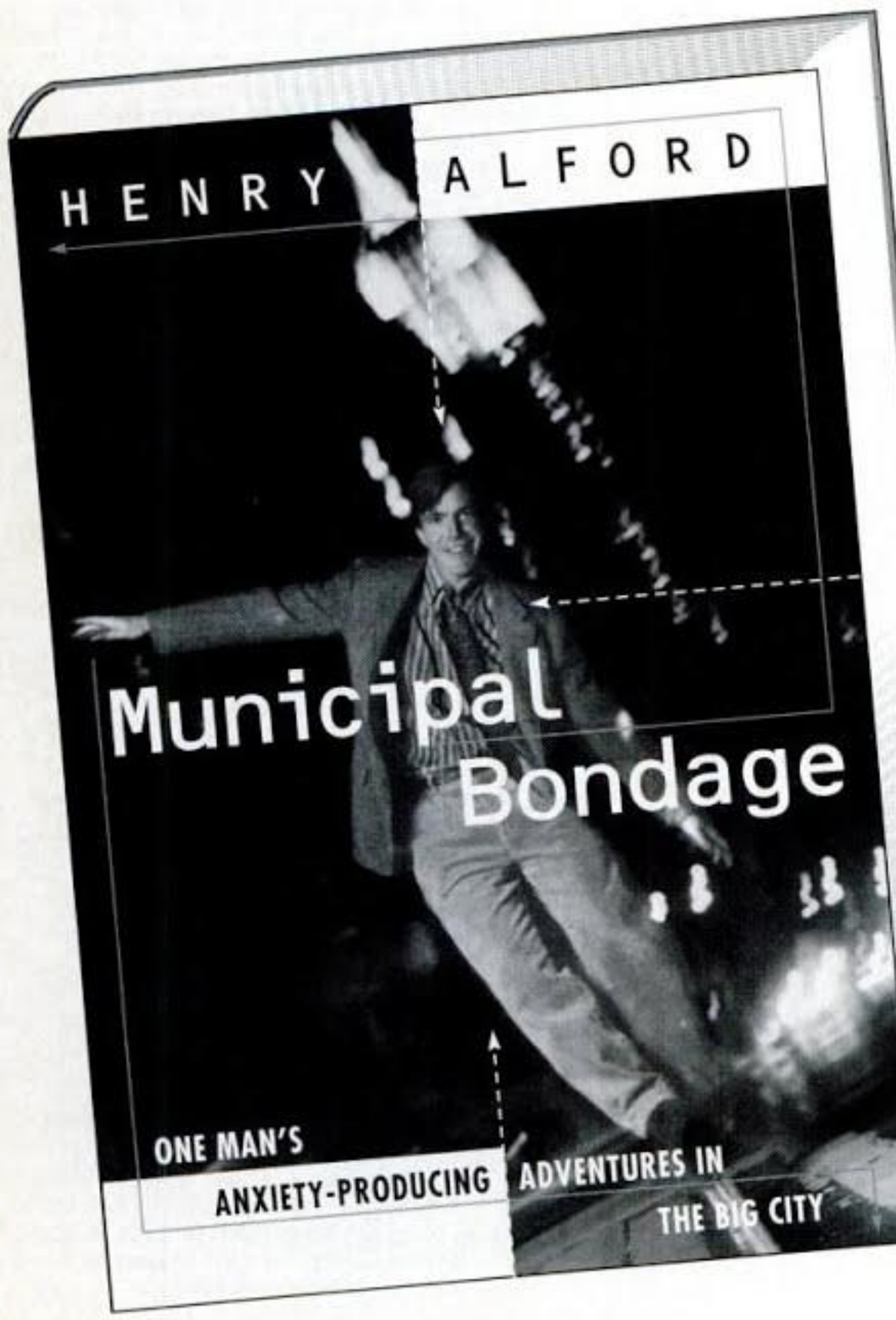


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"'I'm sensing...
I'm sensing *cheese*,' I intoned.
'I'm not sure if it's Roquefort or something from the Pyrenees — but it's some kind of *blue cheese*...' "

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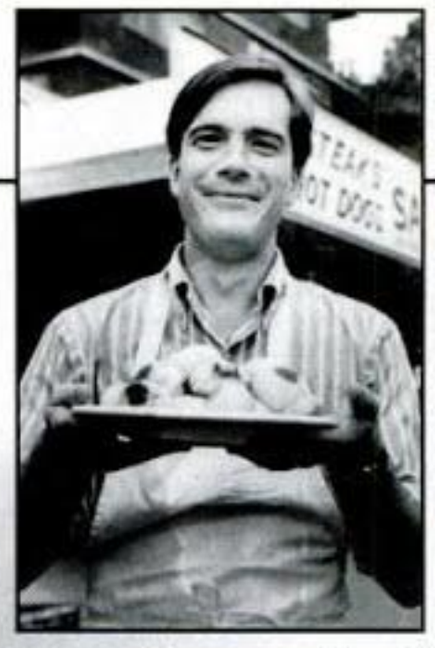


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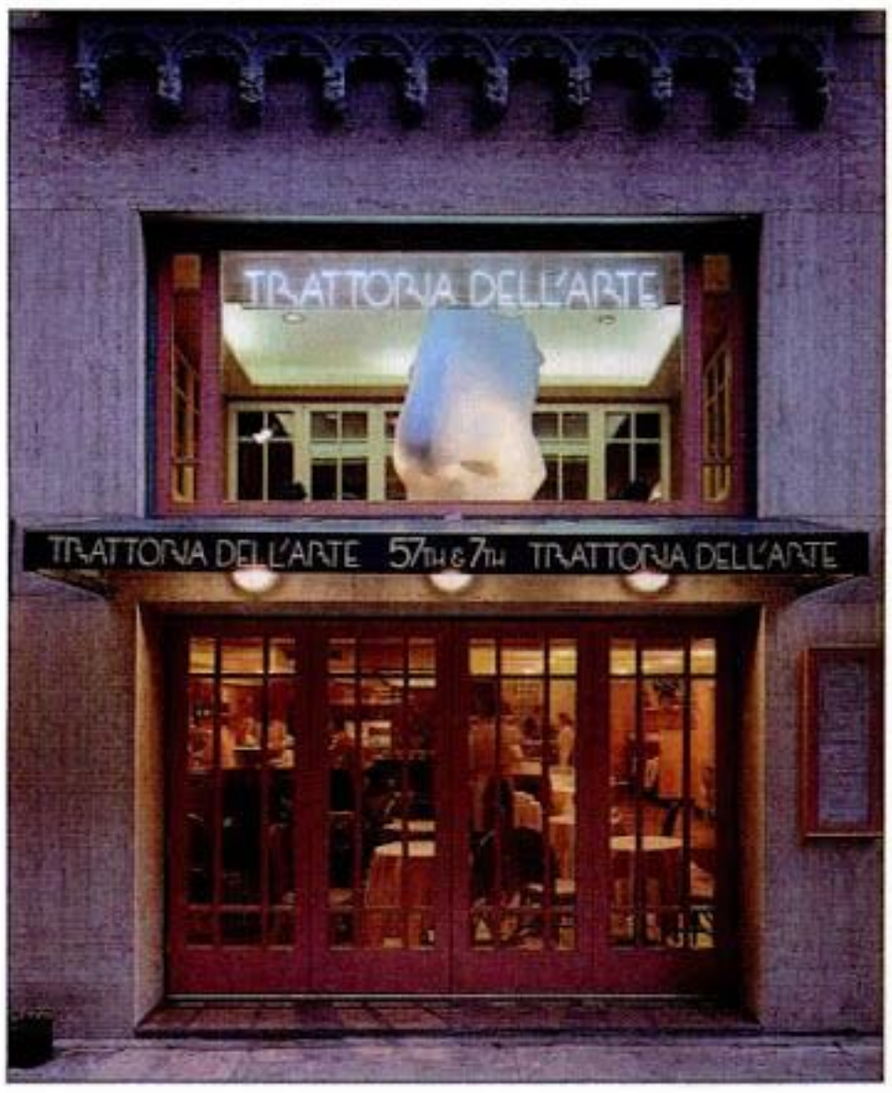
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demonstrates an exquisite resignation in his four-stanza poem, "Audious [*sic*] Menendez: The Ballad of Lyle and Erik." While a less assured poet might shy away from treating the Menendez murders in rhyming couplets, Mike embraced the subject with equal measures of courage and sensitivity, writing, "Jose and Kitty your lying dead/ cause Lyle and Erik shot ya in the head." In his final stanza, Mike vividly renders the Menendez brothers' argument for acquittal:

> **Jose and Kitty they're talking mess**
> **that Kitty let Lyle under her dress**
> **Then Jose touched them in places**
> **when they were young with ice cream faces.**

The result is a poem that, not unlike Yeats's "Easter 1916," both captures an event and transcends it, leaving us grateful that at least a few brave writers recognize that our strictly-no-poetry submissions policy, so easily misinterpreted as a statement that we will accept no poetry, is actually a desperate plea for verse.

Mike the Parking Attendant isn't the only reader capable of distilling disturbing and complex subjects down to a few sterling words; Kevin Hughes of Washington, D.C., shares the gift. He writes, "While riding on an Amtrak train a few months ago, reflecting on the multitude of sexual-misconduct allegations against Senator Bob Packwood, it occurred to me that Bob might well have been 'packing a woodie' throughout most of his tenure in the United States Senate." Kevin's pitiless logic eventually leads him to ask, "How much wood would Packwood pack if Packwood could pack wood?" We don't know, smart guy. But we have a question for you: If you're really from Washington, D.C., why aren't you angry about the slant of the news and entertainment industries in regards to firearms legislation?

CORRECTION

In October's "The Fat Years," we misstated the year that Bernhard Goetz took back the subways for real Americans; the Goetz incident occurred in 1984.

only within the touchy-feely confines of Playfair-sanctioned emotional experiences.

Frank Gerkens
Washington, D.C.

I am writing to express my dismay at your November Naked City investigation on cartoon chewable vitamins ["No Velma, No Peace," by Chip Rowe]. Although your source for the Scooby-Doo Vitamins entry, Lori Shelton of Leiner Health Products, opines that Scooby-Doo is "kind of a passé character," his colleagues at Hanna-Barbera believe that nothing is farther from the truth. Chew on this: Scooby-Doo has been a network-TV star for nearly 20 consecutive years. A career in TV like that puts our lovable, ever-hungry Great Dane in with the Hawkeye Pierces and Sam Malones of the sitcom world. Plus, his fans continue to push Scooby over the top. His Q rating recently placed him in the top ten favorite cartoon stars among kids age six to eleven, and there is an adult on-line Scooby-Doo fan club on the Prodigy interactive service. He also recently made a guest appearance on *In Living Color*. All I can say is *Zoinks!*, that's hardly the stuff of a star with only the reported "minimum daily allowance" of fame!

This fall Scooby admittedly took his first break ever from the rigorous pace of a network season, but his work in cable continues to delight viewers of both USA and the hip, highly rated Cartoon Network.

In contrast to Ms. Shelton's opinion, we at Hanna-Barbera are happy to confirm that Scooby-Doo is currently reviewing several options in TV, features and consumer products—like *Scooby snacks*. And given his momentum and recent surge of popularity, we trust that whatever Scooby does next will be anything but "passé."

Tom Barreca
Vice president,
Classic Characters
Hanna-Barbera Inc.
Hollywood, California

"Tom," would you happen to be a tall, thin young man with a shambling gait and a scraggly goatee?

SPY welcomes letters from its readers. Address correspondence to SPY, *The SPY Building, 5 Union Square West, New York, N.Y. 10003. Typewritten letters are preferred. Please include your daytime telephone number. Letters may be edited for length or clarity.*

Tipping Aloud

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As part of our effort to report the latest, hottest stories, we at SPY rely on tips phoned in by civic-minded readers. Now, in the hope of encouraging more tipping, SPY has endowed its own 900 number, the SPY Dishline™.

The procedure is simple: Readers with a story to share can dial **1-900-TELL-ALL**, relate the pertinent details and leave a name and a number where they can be reached. We will, of course, oblige tippers who don't want their name near any story that eventually sees print.

The cost of the call is 99 cents per minute—just enough to cover our expenses—and any tip we use will be paid for at the usual SPY contributor's rate. Callers should be at least 18 years of age.

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Financial AIDS

Tired of earning 2.02 percent interest on your hard-earned savings? Sick of committing your cash to money-market funds or Treasury bills only to watch them accrue a paltry 3 to 5 percent while your Visa bill grows at quadruple that rate?

Well, fret no more, because the ideal investment opportunity has finally arrived. Street name: Death futures. Attributes: Uncomplicated, safe, legal and nearly guaranteed to reap you 20 percent annual returns. "We have violated the risk-reward laws of personal finance," says Steve Keller, president of Kelco, a Lexington, Kentucky, company specializing in death futures, which, despite the scary title, never endanger *your* life in the least.

Here's how they work: A terminally ill person—usually suffering from AIDS—sells his life-insurance policy to an investor (you) for dimes on the dollar. The ill person gets your cash, but once he dies, you collect on his policy and enjoy startling profits for your effort. "There's no other investment to compare with this," Keller says. "You're getting the high yield of a high-risk venture *without* the high risk."

The risk is low because of the protection that state insurance departments offer holders of life-insurance policies, generally guaranteeing full payout even if the insurance company goes bankrupt. But the yields are high for an entirely different reason. "The person with AIDS [your seller] is usually desperate and destitute," explains Mark Leeds of the National Viatical Association, a trade group of 40 death-futures companies, with headquarters in Waco, Texas. "He's probably lost his job and exhausted his savings." Which means major discounts for you.

How major? "Investors are paying 60 to 80 cents on the dollar," Leeds says. "And they're earning 20 percent or better annual yields. I mean, what the hell do you get on a CD these days?"

It sounds too good to be true, but it gets even better. The death-futures industry, still in its infancy, is largely unregulated. To date, only four states (California, Kansas, New Mexico and New York) have any laws governing the market. In the rest of the country (except for Utah, which bans the practice of transferring life-insurance policies for profit altogether), you're free to wheel and deal without Big Brother sniffing around for evidence of low-ball bids and high-pressure pitches. "All you need is a telephone and a line of bullshit, and you're in business," says one death-futures trader.

Perhaps you're worried about a cure. It wouldn't be very profitable, after all, if your AIDS patient reneged on the deal by actually surviving the disease. To avoid such a fate, most investors restrict themselves to sellers who are so sick that they have two years' life expectancy or less. As a result, "cures are not a consideration," according to Beth Linnenkamp, vice president of the Access Program, a death-futures company in Los Angeles. "Even if a cure for AIDS were found tomorrow, no one with a 24-month life expectancy could be helped."

The life expectancy of a given seller is determined by physicians hired by the death-futures company he chooses to approach with his policy. This service, along with an analysis of the policy and the carrier's financial stability, is covered by the fee charged to you, the buyer.



"It's a feel-good transaction for everybody"

"We know that if the patient's T-cell count is below 200, he has 12 to 24 months to live," says Miriam Shear, an area representative of Accelerated Benefits, a death-futures company in Southfield, Michigan. "But the money you pay him may actually *affect* his life expectancy," she warns. "You give him funds, and he'll start to eat better, enjoy better care, maybe some vitamin therapy. That can change all the calculations."

Some industry veterans, however, don't believe life expectancy is calculable at all. David Reed, the president of Medical Escrow Society, a death-futures company in Tavares, Florida, says, "No one can really predict when someone is going to die. I've seen a guy with a 0 T-cell count go two years, and I've seen one with a

Illustration by William Duke

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HILTON KRAMER WILL HATE THIS BOOK!

WHAT BETTER RECOMMENDATION COULD YOU HAVE?

ROY LICHTENSTEIN'S GREAT POP ART CLASSICS OF THE 1960S RETURN TO THEIR ROOTS IN A LIGHTHEARTED SAGA OF LOVE AND AMBITION, BY TONY HENDRA.

FULL COLOR THROUGHOUT

IT'S A COMIC!
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BRAD '61



AN ORIGINAL ROMANCE BY
TONY HENDRA

INSPIRED BY THE POP PAINTINGS OF
ROY LICHTENSTEIN

260 T-cell count die in eight days."

But Eddie Speed of now-defunct Life Benefits, which was based in Irving, Texas, says even mistaken assumptions haven't spoiled the profitability of death futures. "I had an investor who bought $3 million of policies through me in 1990," he says. "He paid $60,000 for $100,000 policies that were supposed to mature in 18 months. Many of his sellers lived 24 to 26 months, but he still cleared $1 million in profit, which ain't half bad."

Steve Keller of Kelco estimates death futures to be a potential $2 billion business. "That's the amount of life insurance that lapses every year," he explains. "The market is only about a quarter of that size now."

So there's still plenty of room for you, even if you don't have millions to play with.

"Ninety percent of the companies in the industry will talk to the individual investor," says Steve Simon, president of American Life Resources,

DEATH AS A SALESMAN

If gobs of money are truly being made off of AIDS patients, we want our share. So, to test the profitability of the death-futures market, we posed as $75,000 investors and called a viatical-settlement company in the Midwest. (The word *viatical* comes from *viaticum*, the communion given to Christians who are near death or believed to be dying.)

Tom, president of the company, warmly welcomed our interest. Though the firm owns $10 million in life-insurance policies purchased from the terminally ill, he assured us that there was plenty of room for average Joes like us. "You're a little guy like me," he said. "We'll find you a small policy."

But we had one worry: the doctors at the company. They would determine the life expectancies of the sellers for us, and because the return on any purchase of life-insurance policies would hinge on exactly how long we had to wait for the seller to die, our investment would sink or swim on those doctors' calculations. "Life expectancies are guesses," Tom told us. "When I meet a seller personally, I come up with better judgments than the doctors. I can judge a person's attitude, get in their head a little bit and sense whether they've given up or not."

So Tom would be our handicapper.

"I even had a couple guys who I dreamed about," he continued, "and when I called the next day, they had passed away."

A handicapper with mystical hunches.

Tom offered a reference, and we proceeded to call him. "I bought three policies through Tom," Jim told us, "all under $25,000." Jim said he paid about 65 cents on the dollar. One seller died within seven months of the sale, netting Jim a quick 92 percent annual yield. The other two were still alive in the twelfth month. All three had 12-month life expectancies.

"Even if the other two policies are very slow to mature," Jim said, "I will nevertheless have made a *much* better return than I ever could in stocks or bonds.

"But Tom tells me that my other two guys are real sick," he said, "so I should do well. Not that I would root for anyone's death."

We thanked him and immediately phoned Tom again. He fell into what we can only surmise is his usual patter: "I've outguessed the doctors so far. I've had a few psychology classes, and I can sense attitudes. If someone doesn't want to fight, they're going to die."

Yes, but—

"Sometimes you get an IV-drug user. They'll take your money and go out and hurt themselves. Shortens the life expectancy."

That sounded promising, but what about all the legalities? Could our lawyer read the policy before we wired any money?

"Sure," Tom said, "but it will just slow everything down."

We explained that we wanted to be long-term investors who roll their profits right back into new policies.

"Hey," he said, "when I started in 1990, I was paying for policies on my credit card. So I had to beat the 18 percent interest rate they were charging me. And it was no problem. I still turned a nice profit."

We said we wanted in, and Tom said he'd put us on his Rolodex, assuring us, "I'm going to find something solid for you, something good."

A week later, he called.

"I'll get right to the point. I've got a guy. He has six months to live and a $10,000 policy. You can have it for $7,450. You'll be 92.5 percent beneficiary and we'll be 7.5 percent beneficiary. So you'll eventually get $9,250 on your $7,450. Even if he lives a year, you'll earn 23 percent on your money."

We asked how sick the seller was.

"He's got a T-cell count of 30, so he's in bad shape. He's had three pneumonias, thrush, diarrhea, weakness, insomnia and depression. But $7,450 isn't enough money to turn around his depression, so you don't have to worry about that."

Unworried, we said we'd pass. It's not like he was an IV-drug user or anything. —*E.Z.*

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based in Miami Beach. "Nearly everyone in the business is looking for funding. Always."

Mike Zadoff, president of Dedicated Resources, a death-futures company in Rochester, New York, agrees. "We have more sellers than we can possibly handle," he says. "There are about five policies available for every single-policy buyer."

Sounds like a buyer's market. Sounds like a bargain.

Ted*, a retired optometrist in Westlake, California, thought so. After pooling the funds of six friends and family members in 1991, Ted purchased nine policies through various brokers. "We paid an average of

"Cures are not a consideration"

67.5 cents on the dollar," he says. "Three people died within six months, which made us about an 80 percent annual yield. One lasted a year, which made us about a 40 percent annual yield. And one lasted two years, which made us 20 percent."

The other four were still alive in the 25th month after the transfer, even though they had all had 12-month life expectancies. "So much for medical science," Ted says.

Still, he feels the investment treated him well. "Everyone came out ahead," he explains, "including the sellers who have died. They enjoyed some money while they were alive to get better care, pay the rent, whatever."

Steve Simon calls it "a feel-good transaction for everybody," and Ted agrees: "Some people think it's a little ghoulish, because I buy your policy and then the first thing I do is say, 'Gee, I hope he kicks the bucket.' But it's a good return on both sides. It's a transaction where everyone benefits."

—Eric Zicklin

** Some of the names in this article and the accompanying sidebar have been changed.*



If you've a fishing story or adventure to tell about, drop us a line.

WATCH OUT FOR THESE MEN. They've caught bigger fish. Faced meaner foes. Handled tougher situations than most.

They're Tennessee whiskeymen, trading stories in Jack Daniel's old office here at the distillery. That's Bull Waggoner on the right, going on about the trophy bass he caught last spring. (We're still trying to account for its existence.) Some tall tales will fill this room before everyone's through. But when these men talk of how faithful we are to Jack Daniel's whiskey-making ways, there's no exaggeration.



SMOOTH SIPPIN'
TENNESSEE WHISKEY

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Vermin on the 'mount

The never-ending cliffhanger of Paramount's fate—suspended for so long like Sly in the sky—might seem to be resolved, but the really important question remains, What cushy production deals are in the works for president Stanley Jaffe and studio chairwoman Sherry Lansing? The even bigger question is, Why does no one but Jaffe and Lansing care? Well, other people's attention may be fixed on the juicier problems that Jaffe faces.

Take the suit from former Paramount indie producer David Kirkpatrick. As Dawn Steel noted to Kirkpatrick's great consternation in her autobiography last year ("He became known as 'The Teflon Executive,' because wherever he went, failure always followed"), he is a gold medalist at the classic Hollywood gymnastic feat of failing upward. David didn't produce a single movie after entering a three-year, $500,000-a-year postdeparture deal with the studio in 1991 (this is a man whose greatest contribution to cinema may well be the screenplay he wrote for the 1976 film *The Great Texas Dynamite Chase*), but he's now suing Paramount for emotional distress, fraud and breach of implied contract. Kirkpatrick says that his ideas were routinely dismissed, that Jaffe had a personal vendetta based on their clash over the film *School Ties*, and that the furniture from his office was removed prematurely. According to one less-than-sympathetic colleague, Kirkpatrick was told well in advance when he was expected to move out, but upon rolling into work at noon on the day in question, he was *aghast* to find his office furniture arranged haphazardly on the lawn.

Kirkpatrick may be a nuisance, but a sexual-harassment lawsuit with which Paramount is now contending could turn into a much bigger problem. The suit, brought by Karen Ginsberg, an assistant director on the 1992 Paramount film *Pet Sematary II*, may be heard in the courtroom of New York's Kimba Wood (Wood is currently deciding whether the case is in her jurisdiction). From late 1991 through early March 1992 on location in Georgia, according to affidavits from Ginsberg filed in U.S. district court in New York and with the EEOC, producer Ralph Singleton (*Cagney & Lacey*, *Harlem Nights*, *Leap of Faith*) "fondled complainant's breasts and genitals...ejaculated in front of complainant and placed semen on her lips, requested that complainant perform oral sex on him while he was driving...and sodomized complainant." When they returned home, according to the affidavits, he repeatedly called her. Paramount has denied the allegations and claimed the relationship was consensual; indeed, Paramount maintains that Ginsberg initiated it.



Paramount St. Helens?

There's not much to be thankful about in the current witches' brew of trouble at Paramount

Oddly, in its attempt to defend itself against Ginsberg's allegations, the studio appears to have sunk itself into an even deeper hole. In order to gain some distance from Pet II Productions, the subsidiary production company on *Pet Sematary II*, Paramount Communications executives swore in affidavits that they were not involved with the day-to-day business activities of Pet II. But these same executives are listed as Pet II officers in initial corporate filings, and, according to Ginsberg, other Paramount executives were both on the set and in regular phone contact with Singleton. Paramount is arguing that the case's proper jurisdiction is in Georgia, where they say the statute of limitations has run out, rather than in New York, where it hasn't. (Ginsberg's affidavit notes that the EEOC decided to assign the case to its New York office.) In the interim, Singleton has not exactly been shunted off until the whole thing dies down. He is coproducing Tom Clancy's *Clear and Present Danger*, the studio's putative '94 blockbuster now shooting with Harrison Ford. (Lansing, as we know, is one of Hollywood's foremost power feminists.)

Is Sharon Stone a curse or what? Jaffe and his team suffered posttraumatic-stress flashbacks with the

Illustration by Victor Juhasz

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troubled film *Intersection*, starring Stone and Richard Gere. A source of behind-the-scenes executive angst reminiscent of *Sliver*, the film underwent some last-minute surgery after receiving unusually bad audience reaction and low test numbers, and its original Christmas Day release date was pushed back to late January amid suspiciously loud grumblings by director Mark Rydell about too-tight production schedules. The good news for Lansing and Jaffe is that while *Intersection* was originally a pet project of theirs from their days as partners, at Paramount it was eventually passed on to recycled-TV-sitcom producer-director Bud "*Start the Revolution Without Me*" Yorkin. At that time Yorkin, perhaps unaware of the good grace he had received, surprised his colleagues by insisting on sole credit for the film. Now, should it tank, Lansing and Jaffe will be able to blame Yorkin for the project's difficulties.

Yorkin is one of the aging hipsters from the 1970s who have become a standard sighting on the Paramount lot. Paramount observers are amused; one says simply of Bud, "No one knows why he's there." Sherry and Stanley's other friends from the Me Decade include David Picker, Alan Ladd Jr., Bob Evans and David Brown.

Kirkpatrick is a gold medalist at the classic Hollywood gymnastic feat of failing upward

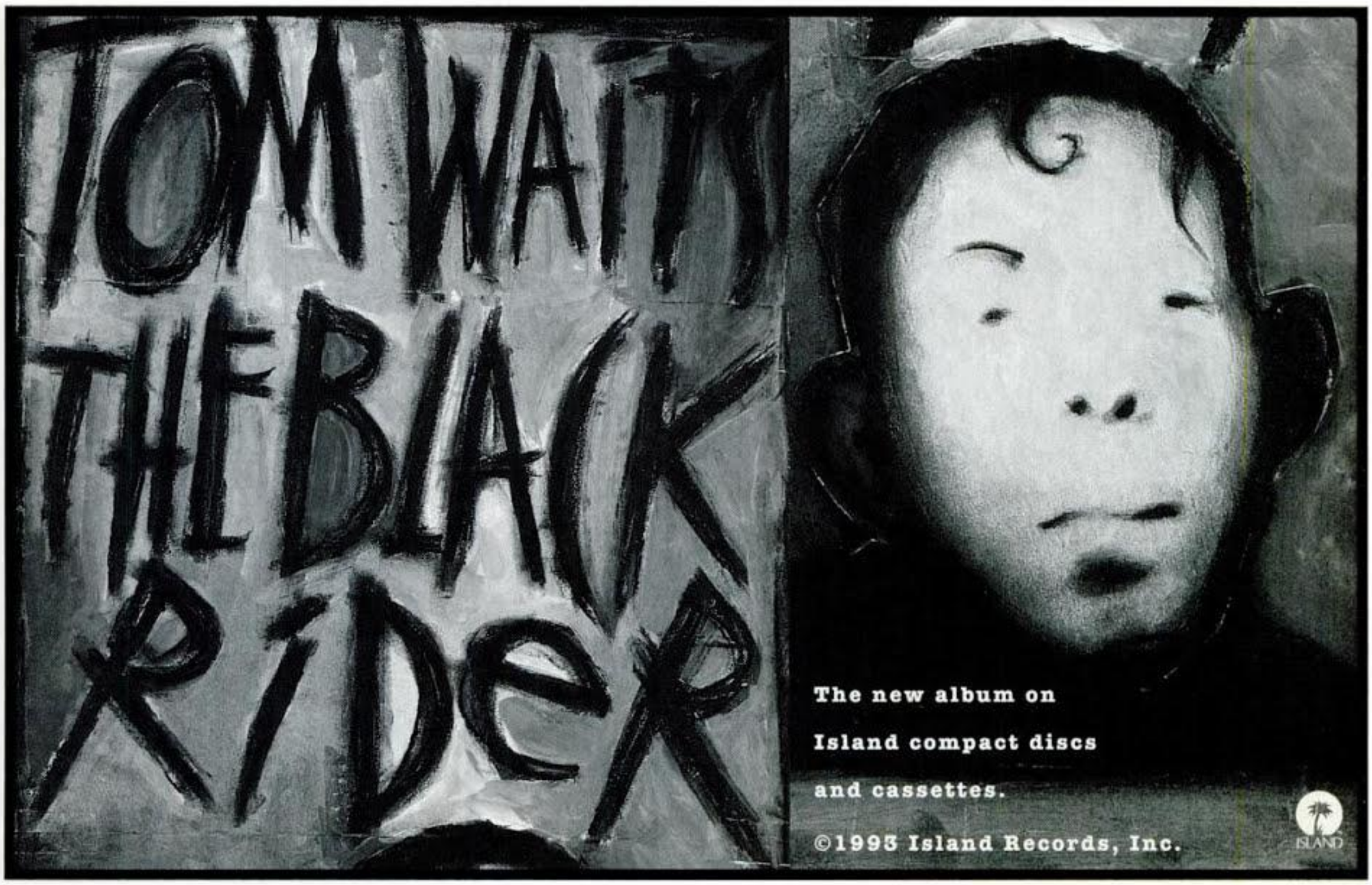
There's not much to be thankful about in the current witches' brew of trouble at Paramount. But there'll certainly be relief now that the Richard Benjamin–directed *Milk Money* has been shot and put to bed. Paramount's production vice presidents participated in a heated auction for the script, which they ultimately landed for a cool $1 million. Unhappily, this was before Lansing had actually read the script. After she did, she was reportedly not a very merry Sherry.

Trims and Ends: At a recent company-wide executive meeting following Disney's dismal summer performance, Buena Vista Pictures marketing president Robert Levin (who, we reported last October, stayed at the Bel Age Hotel for nine months, *free*, while he was separating from his wife) had the distinction of witnessing Jeffrey "Sparky" Katzenberg utter the words *Are we spending* enough*?*—a sentence not previously known to have passed the Disney Studios chairman's lips.

Levin has made a few enemies along the way. One former colleague who hoped to ensure Levin's place in the depths of financial hell went so far as to bring SPY's October column to the attention of the Internal Revenue Service. "Oh, that's bad," was the response of the IRS agent who got the call.

See you Monday night at Mortons.

—Celia Brady



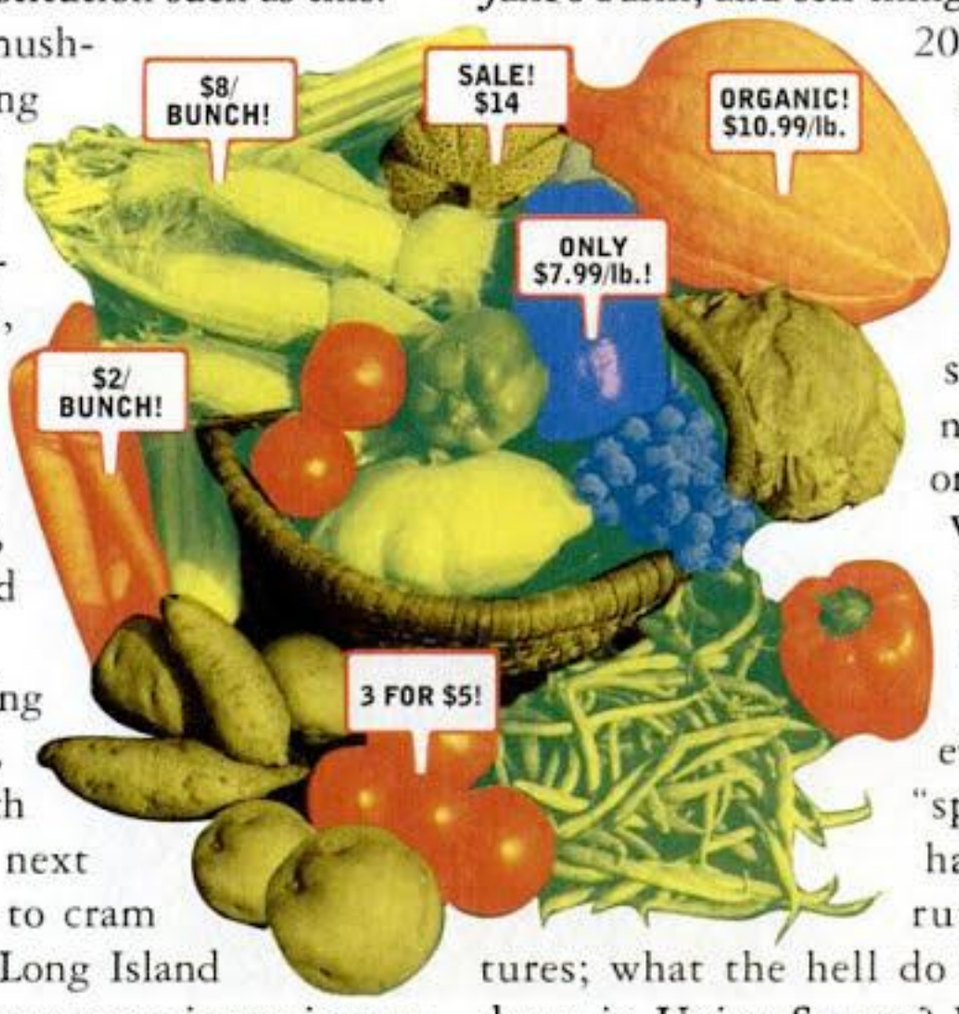
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Naked City

Admit It! It Sucks! Part II: The Greenmarket

You know the feeling: A friend calls and suggests a rendezvous at the Union Square Greenmarket, followed by cappuccino and a Jean-Pierre Melville flick at the Film Forum. *Fantastic!*, you gasp, mindful of what a municipal, metropolitan and perhaps even national treasure the Greenmarket has become. You love the Greenmarket, you positively *love* the Greenmarket; it's an island of rustic sanity in this sea of asphalt madness. You've never tucked a clump of extra-jumbo sage or Greek oregano into your Channel 13 tote bag without feeling a rush of guilty pleasure, realizing how lucky you are to live in a city blessed with a miraculous institution such as this.

With visions of portobello mushrooms and flowering kale dancing in your head, right alongside equally tantalizing images of pecan-raisin levain bread and European yellow-fleshed potatoes, you tell your friend, yes, yes, I'd love to meet you at the Greenmarket, I'd love to shop for supersweet Italian onions with you, I'd love to sample the myriad brands of goat's-milk curd.



But then you remember: Parking is kind of tight in Union Square, the neighborhood is crawling with junkies, you're going to L.A. next week so you really don't want to cram your refrigerator full of eastern Long Island goat's-milk curd, and, oh yeah, your mom is coming up for the weekend. So, almost tearfully, you beg off.

But after you've put down the phone, you must be honest with yourself and confess that the real reason you blew off your friend wasn't because of the junkies or parking or that upcoming trip to L.A. or even Mom's visit. The real reason you begged off is because you know what everybody else in New York knows but doesn't dare admit in public.

The Greenmarket sucks.

Admit it and you'll feel a whole lot better. What kind of shyster operation charges $3 a pound for quark and $4.25 for a loaf of pecan-raisin bread? What is that quark made of—plutonium? And who wants to spend an arm and a leg for orange pippins and purple cauliflower, or shell out $4.50 for a microscopic jar of honey, just because it's produced by some upstate New Age bozos with a name like Wild Hive Apiaries?

Let's backtrack and remember the way the agricultural system was originally intended to function: Farmers with names like Jeb and Bob are supposed to bring their products to market and sell them at prices that the consumer can afford. They're supposed to have farms with names like Bob's Farm, Jake's Farm, or Bob and Jake's Farm, and sell things like potatoes and turnips for 20 cents a pound, six pounds for $1. If they want to get fancy, they can also sell something exotic, like gourds. But God did not put farmers on this planet so that they could start operations with chichi names like Wood Homestead or Ronnybrook Farm Dairy or Woolyhill Farm or Windfall Farms or—get a load of this one!—Keith's Farm. God did not put farmers on this planet so they could have their own "special projects coordinator" handling publicity for their rutabagan and prunial ventures; what the hell do they think they're running down in Union Square? IBM? GM? God did not put farmers on this planet to sell Greek oregano at $1.50 a clump, or extra-jumbo sage or babka. Hey, what's wrong with American oregano? What's wrong with jumbo-size sage?

And who needs babka?

There is a widespread illusion, fostered by unabashed horticultural groupies, that the farmers at the Greenmarket are caring, sensitive souls who share their Aquebogue, Long Island, bounty with the public out of the goodness of their Aquebogian hearts. Horsefeathers. Farmers at the Greenmarket reap the benefits of a rigged, municipally subsidized patronage system,

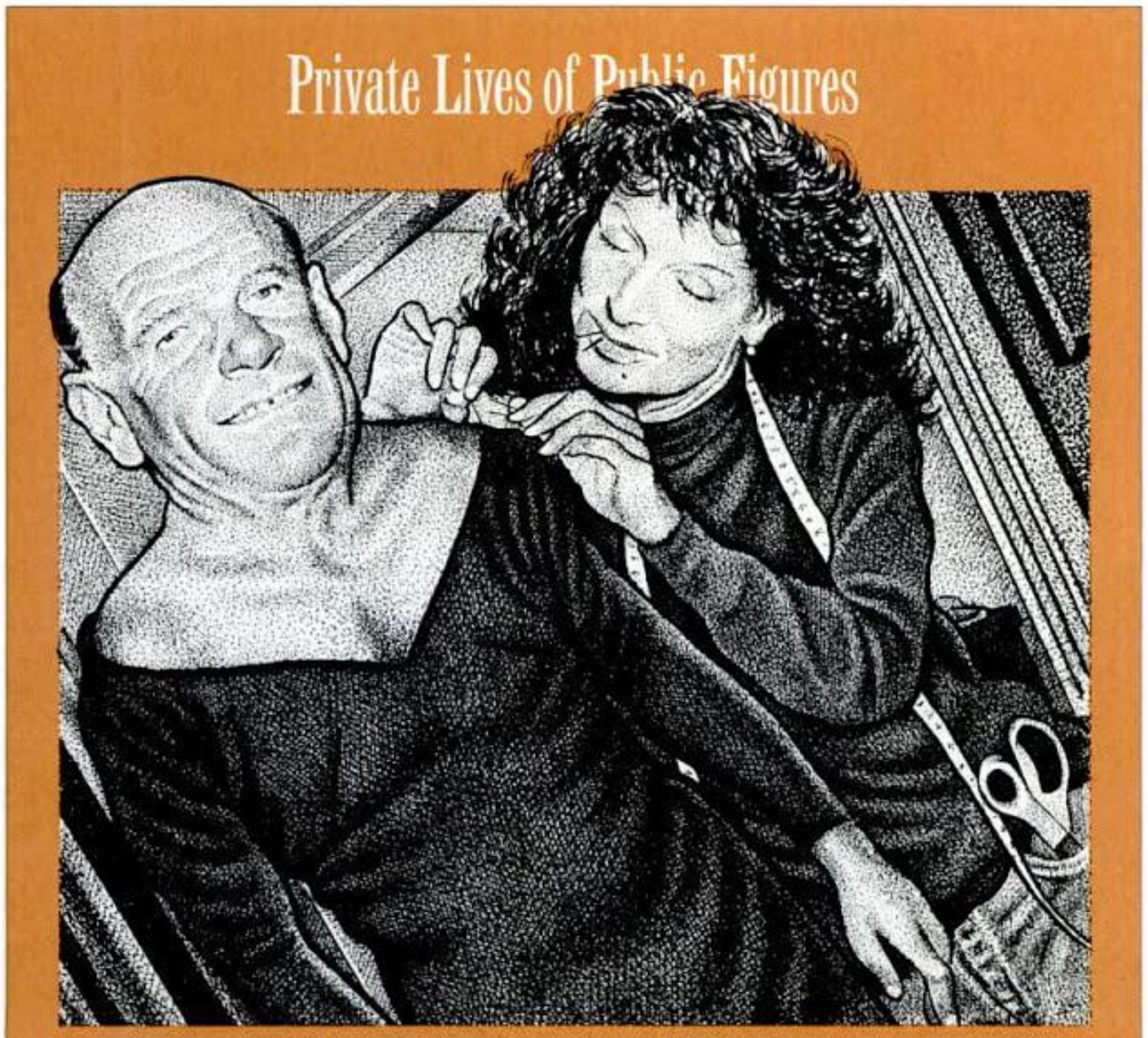
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paying next to nothing to rent prime retail space while local merchants in nearby stores get hammered by stratospheric rents and obscene taxes. And how do the folks at Touchy-Feely Acres reward us for our largesse? By charging $4.50 for a head of flowering kale. By charging $1.50 for a moldy clump of extra-sweet Italian onions. By charging $1.75 for a pathetic mocha-chocolate-chip cookie that doesn't taste half as good as the mass-produced chocolate-chip cookie you can buy in the Korean deli across the street. And you can bet that the Korean deli owners pay a lot more than $34 to $55 a day for their retail space.

For too many years, the Greenmarket has been the beneficiary of an unbelievably idiotic shard of Gotham mythology: that providing John Q. Public with access to exotic fruits and vegetables in an open-air setting will somehow improve the quality of life in this blighted municipality. This theory is positively infantile, postulating a Greenmarket whose principal function is neither economic nor agricultural, but which serves as a sort of Bourgeois Neurotic's Fresh Air Fund. Yes, the Greenmarket allows frustrated poets, failed performance artists and frizzy-haired single women with too many cats to think that they're communing with nature just because they bought some goddamned European yellow-fleshed potatoes, rooted parsley or handmade pretzels while standing in a steady drizzle. In fact, they were just getting the organic shaft.

Far from improving the quality of life in the city, the sight of all those well-heeled people forking over $3 for quark and $4.50 for a loaf of whole-wheat sourdough carrot bread while crack babies are dying in the streets breeds resentment among inner-city youths, who retaliate by breaking into middle-class people's apartments and robbing them while they are out shopping for babka and goat's-milk curd at the Greenmarket. It is a vicious cycle that must be stopped.

—Joe Queenan

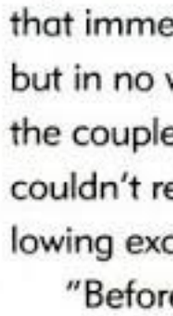


Diane Von Furstenberg readies another outfit for her spring collection.

Illustration by Drew Friedman

The Fine Print

by Louis Theroux



Danson in the Dark

After toupeed sitcom actor Ted Danson did his notorious minstrel shtick at Whoopi Goldberg's Friars roast last year, a few of his controversial witticisms made their way into print. But as far as we know, no one in the press printed transcripts from an actual tape recording of the event that immediately preceded but in no way contributed to the couple's breakup. We couldn't resist sharing the following excerpts.

"Before I get into my thing, I wanted to say that this morning, as I was shaving and wondering what I was going to say this afternoon, Whoopi was giving me a blowjob. And all of a sudden, I looked down and I said, 'Aw, c'mon, Whoop! Don't nigger-lip it!' I came to discuss a problem here, ladies and gentlemen! Please, now!...I know I'm prepared for arguments, but I got to tell you, black chicks sure do know their way around a dick. But, in all fairness, white girls get toys for Christmas.

"But I tell ya, I sure was nervous today....Right before we started, someone pulled me aside and said, 'Ted, remember, the mayor [Dinkins] is coming. Don't do any political stuff. Just do nigger jokes.' I said, 'C'mon, man, look at me. Do you think I would stoop to that level?' It's been a hell of a year for us, me and Whoop. We've ▶

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been working so much, it's been hard to get together. We've been so busy, we haven't seen each other in a coon's age. But I tell ya, the tabloids just won't leave us alone. As a matter of fact, this morning, right after we, uh, Whoopi said to me, 'Y'know, if only we could get Burt Reynolds to fuck Michael Jackson, we'd be home free.'

"I love being in the tabloids, you guys. In fact, we had our first fight, with all our 'problems,' we had our first fight just this morning...before. There's this new picture we're going to be doing for Disney called *The Nigger Lovers*. And Miss Diva here insists on playing the nigger. I said, 'C'mon, Whoop! You always play the nigger. Just because you did the nigger nun doesn't mean you get to play the nigger all the time. Someone else will play the nigger. How hard can it be?'

"The tabloids say that our life together is scandalous. I mean this sincerely: A lot of our life is very ordinary. I'll never forget the time I took Whoopi to meet my parents. And I know that the tabloids have said things about us that wasn't true. And I was worried about how my parents would react when I brought Whoopi home, because they're so stuffy and out of touch. But Whoopi fit right in. After she did the laundry and washed the dishes and dusted and generally tidied up the place, my father, my sweet, dear father, offered to give ▶

Naked City

SWF, 5'7", 60 LBS



"If you've ever wondered what you'd look like without those extra pounds, now is your chance!" the ad (*left*) promised enticingly. We sent the following note with our photo: "Hi! Though I'm pretty slim now (I'm 5'7", 100 lbs), I'd like to see what I'd look like if I took off a few more pounds. But I don't want to get *too* slim!"

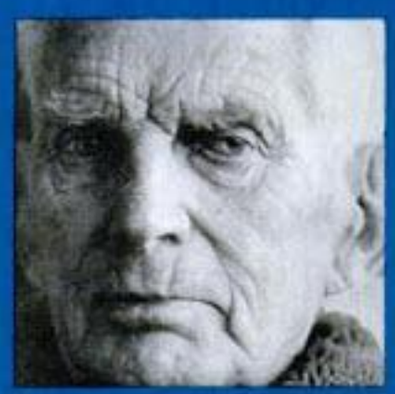
The results (*below*) were appealing, though we expected to look even svelter. —*R. E. Neu*



ULTRA Slim-Fast®

Original Kate Moss photograph by Scott Downie/Celebrity Photo

Separated at Birth?



Endgame writer Samuel Beckett...



and endgame coach Jack Kevorkian?



Jerry lover Delta Burke...



and Jerry leaver Linda Ronstadt?

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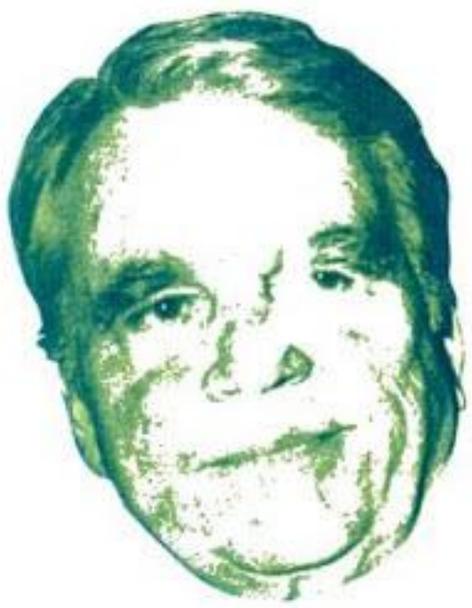

DENIM
GENERATION
YOU WOULD BE PERFECTLY
HAPPY WITHOUT THESE JEANS.

her a ride to the bus stop. I'm not sure about my mother, though. She got out of place. I mean really out of place—especially when she told Whoopi that she should sleep in the barn, by herself. Actually, my mother got along with Whoopi beautifully, because my mother's a dyke.

"Whoopi finished the chores while my dad and I looked through an old photo album of Vanessa Redgrave's. I meant Vanessa Williams pictures, actually. Then it was time for bed, because it was too dark for Whoopi to do the windows. Also, she didn't know what to wear the next day, and I said, 'Man, if you're black, you wear a uniform.' She hadn't had dinner, so she was gonna go out to a 7-Eleven, where nobody would notice that she was black; or else she'd call the Domino's Pizza guy. But then I thought, *I really shouldn't let Whoopi roam around at night*, in case the neighbors were mowing hedges or something. So, uh, instead, I took her out to the deck and fucked the shit out of her....You know the monkey love she's famous for. And greased like a werewolf, too. I mean, her screams could open a garage door. It was incredible. Then once all the neighbors were standing there, Whoopi looked around and she was pissed. She said it was like they never heard a black chick get boned before. And that just got her worked up and she bellowed, 'Yes! Yes! Lily-white motherfucker! Fuck me! Fuck me good!' Exactly at that minute, I heard my mother crack open ▶

Naked City

Masters of Their Respective Domains





As everybody knows, Jerry Seinfeld is a hip young observational comedian who likes to break new ground, both on his sitcom and in his choice of female companionship, and Andy Rooney is a beetle-browed old gasbag with a manual-typewriter fetish who bitches about cleaning out the attic. Two humorists, different as night and day, but both with top-rated TV shows—it says something about the eclectic tastes of the American television audience, doesn't it? These acerbic tidbits come from either Jerry or Andy; see if you can tell them apart. —*Brian Jacobsmeyer*

1. "People who are awake feel superior to people who are asleep because sleeping people usually don't look so good."

2. "I hate carrying shopping bags. I hate receipts."

3. "I've never really known what to do about my muscles. I'd like to look and be more muscular than I am, but there are so many of them, I never know which ones to try to build up."

4. "In modern society, you really don't have to be physically strong to do anything. The only reason that you're getting in shape is so you can get through the workout."

5. "Vacuum cleaners are absolutely unsatisfactory. Anyone who thinks he's cleaning the house when he's vacuuming is kidding himself."

6. "I always have the feeling after a bath that I want to take a shower."

7. "The problem is, while car manufacturers are building hundreds of thousands of new cars every year, they're not making any new spaces."

8. "Most of its lifetime a cake of soap is too small....It's not only too small, it's sharp around the edges. No one wants sharp soap."

9. "Well, I'm getting down to that little sliver of soap in my shower again. I'm going to have to make a decision pretty soon."

10. "The human body is like a condominium apartment. The thing that keeps you from really enjoying it is the maintenance."

11. "My car and my body are in about the same shape....All that's needed is some preventive maintenance."

12. "I prefer buttons to zippers every time....Zipping something gives me an [*sic*] angst."

13. "And why the little plastic bag with the extra buttons in the suit-jacket pocket?"

14. "Nobody likes having 'Happy Birthday' sung to them."

Answers: 1, 3, 5, 6, 8, 11, 12—Rooney; 2, 4, 7, 9, 10, 13, 14—Seinfeld

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BUT
YOU'D
BE
NAKED.

the door. We just sort of froze. But I just tried to slip it in and out a little bit to keep it hard. And my mother said, 'No, not with Ted. The neighbors are getting worried about the future. I don't think you and Miss Goldfarb have given any real thought to what you're doing. What if there are children? What will happen? Who will convince them when they have diarrhea they're not melting? If they go to the beach, cats will try to bury them.' Ah, but Whoopi and I just started to laugh and laugh, and I said, 'Ma, relax! I'm fuckin' her in the ass!'

"I'm moved every time I think of that. Waiter, can I get some service over here? Can you move your feet there, please? Come on, hurry up! [*Waiter brings out watermelon.*] Oh, thanks, I'll just be a moment. [*Eats watermelon.*] Ah, that really hits the spot.

[*To Goldberg*] "I do believe I remember you saying, 'I dare you.'

"Before I introduce our first guest, I have to take care of something here. My mother called this morning and said, in that sweet, unassuming way of hers, 'Now, Ted, if you do nothing else today, it's very important that you do cunt jokes.' And I said, 'I don't know, Ma.' But then my mother pointed out that [Goldberg's] cunt is really huge. She said, 'It's the size of South Africa, and twice as inflamed.' That was what my mom wanted, I'm telling you the truth.

"Well, okay, we've blazed the path pretty well here. Let's get on with it." ❸

Take Me Out to the Turnpike

SPY Helps George Steinbrenner Find a New Home

When the New York Yankees' free-spending, Bronx-weary owner announced last year that he was considering moving his team to the suburbs, one dire question leaped to our minds: How could we exploit this development with a mordant, trenchant, phone-line-jamming prank?



Newark, New Jersey

SPY [posing as "Cliff Seymour," special consultant to the team]: *How enthusiastic would Newark be about being the site of a new Yankee Stadium?*

Sharpe James, mayor of Newark: Come on. We would roll over more than anyone else. And you would have an area out there second to none. You could tie it to mass transportation. You could make the airport line tie into it, you could make Amtrak tie in. You could be the future, you know what I'm saying? It could be Disney World.

What sort of money do you think you could pitch in for the stadium?

Whatever it takes. I'm wedded to doing the idea. I only got one term left before I go fishing.

You know, Mr. Steinbrenner's really keen on this, because he's getting sick of the city…

[*Screaming*] Let me tell you…he's got a gridlock over there! You can't put nothing over there! I've been reading them editorials. You got to go where there's virgin land waiting for you! And build a Taj Mahal! Camden Yards! We're going to be better than Camden Yards!

Now, do you think we could get an honorary position in the city government for George Steinbrenner? Something along the lines of an honorary mayor's position?

Of course. Come on. Those are the easy things.

Bridgeport, Connecticut

SPY: *Do you think Bridgeport would have the space for a stadium? We'd be looking at a minimum of 80 acres.*

Joseph Ganim, mayor of Bridgeport: We would have the space to do it. As a matter of fact, I had contemplated putting a call in to you guys a while ago, when all the talk was going round. But then I thought, *Ah, well, let's see how this thing plays out.* And left it at that. I had to get involved in my own re-election as well.

Do you think the town would be able to pitch in some money for a stadium?

It'd be more the *state* than the town. I've been talking to [Connecticut governor Lowell] Weicker about this. He went to bat for the Patriots, and maybe that's a little bit more than we'd see here. I'm not sure that deal's going to work.

Do you think we could arrange some sort of honorary mayorship for George Steinbrenner?

I hadn't thought about it, but I don't think that's a problem either.

Paterson, New Jersey

SPY: *How enthusiastic would Paterson be about being the site of a new stadium?*

William Pascrell, mayor of Paterson: Of course we'd love to have the New York Yankees here....I mean, first of all, I'm a Yankee fan. For the 56 years of my life. If you sent me a letter, we would go to

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work immediately to find out how much parking space, how much room we would need. You know, we're a small town, compact, 8.4 square miles, but we're at the center of everything here....There's a space off Route 80 which could be utilized. We have the power of condemnation.

So you can just condemn buildings?

Well, I think we have that power. I mean, we certainly wouldn't simply...condemn buildings without discussing it with the city fathers. But this has always been a great sports town.

Linden, New Jersey

SPY: *How enthusiastic would Linden be about being the site of a new stadium?*

John Gregorio, mayor of Linden: I got the perfect place for you....I got about 98 acres next to the Jersey Turnpike. You got the turnpike, you put an entrance there. It's also got rail; you could come right in there by train from New York or wherever. I'm waiting for a call back from the people who own the property, and I feel very confident that they would be willing to sell it....We're a small community—we only got 38,000 people—but we're large in size, over 11 square miles of land. This land...when you come here, I'll...it has some SEQRA problems...

It has some what?

SEQRA [State Environmental Quality Review Act].... It's a...parts of the land are contaminated. But I think that the governor's new rules on that would allow it to be built on without a problem.

Contaminated with what?

The company there was in the, uh, chemical business...and after you're there for so many years, some of the land is probably contaminated. But they're committed to cleaning it up. Formerly the Department of Environmental Protection and Energy wouldn't let you build on any land like that until it was cleaned. But now they're easing that because they're crippling New Jersey, because every plant that moved out has had some kind of a problem. And maybe it would cost them more to clean it up than what it's worth. So now they're saying they're going to ease up those laws and let you build over it. —*Tim Long*

Interoffice Mammarendum

FOX TELEVISION STATIONS INC.
A UNIT OF FOX INC.

To: Patrick Jarvis

From: Denise Van Patten

Date: September 14, 1993

Subject: "The Mo Show"/Standards and Practices

This memo will confirm my conversations with you earlier today.

According to Don Bay, for the Program on large-breasted women, the following terms are acceptable:

"boobs"
"jugs"
"hooters"
"bazongas"
"snack trays"

The following terms are not acceptable:

"tits"
"knockers"

cc: Don Bay
Gerry Friedman
Daphne Gronich
Brian Graden
David Keneipp
Patti Mailman
Lillian Smith
Scott St. John

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The SPY Lazlo Letters

INSTALLMENT IX

The Emperor's New Cloth

This month, Mr. Toth (aka Don Novello) congratulates some friends from the East on their shogun wedding but doesn't even get a thank-you card.

Lazlo Toth
P.O. Box 245
Fairfax, California
94930 U.S.A.

NO REPLY !

Crown Prince Naruhito
Crown Prince of Japan
Toyko, Japan (NIPPON)

July 6, 1993

Dear Your Royal Crown Highness,

First of all a big Congradulatuons! to you for getting married. Stand up! I wish I was there to give you a pat on the back, even though I know commoners are not allowed to touch royalty, unless they marry one, in which case the rules are suspended.

Anyway, I'm glad you took the plunge and tied the knot!

I'm sorry I'm getting this wedding gift off to you a little late, but Ann Landers say's one has up to five years to send a wedding gift, so I guess I'm over four years ahead of myself instead of only a little under one month behind, if you get my drift.

On that special day (June 9), I wanted to go to the park and fly a special kite in yours and your new bride's honor, but most stores don't carry string anymore, it's ashame, and when I started tying pieces of string that I had around the house together, I found I only had about twelve feet worth, way too little, sorry.

Anyway, about a week ago, my Long's store did have this nice tablecloth on sale. It was a little expensive, but I got it at half price, I'll admit it, because I bought it a day after the 4th of July (a big holiday here), and they lowered the price because of the stripes. I hope you and Princess Masako like it. And I hope the two of you will have many enjoyable meals on it.

I myself don't know much about Oriental women but we have one here on T.V. (television) and if your Masako is half the woman that Connie Chung is, you got yourself a fine lady, congradulations!

I see a lot of your cars on the road over here, how about letting us sell some of our stuff over there?,

Lazlo Toth

Lazlo Toth

P.S. Last night I went to see Steven Spielman's film "Jurastric Park". My opinion: Two Thumbs and Eight Forefingers Down! It Stunk! Not half as good as Godzilla! Just thought you'd like to know.

CUSTOMS—DOUANE C 1
May be Officially Opened
(Peut être ouvert d'office)

SEE INSTRUCTIONS ON BACK

Contents in detail
Désignation détaillée du contenu:
LETTER AND TABLECLOTH

Mark X here if a gift (X)
Il s'agit d'un cadeau
or a sample of merchandise ()
d'un échantillon de marchandises

Value: $4 Weight: 8 oz.
Valeur Poids

PS Form 2976, Feb. 1989



Lazlo Toth photographed by Mojgan B. Azimi

Jurassic Parker

The movie may be long gone from theaters, but the merchandising continues unabated. One of the more egregious items has come from Alfred A. Knopf. *Jurassic Park: The Gift Edition*, according to the publishing company's 1994 catalog, is "a special illustrated edition of [Michael Crichton's] acclaimed best seller, autographed, with a new preface by the author."

As desirable as the book sounds, and as eminently worth its $35 price tag, Knopf did overlook one detail in its glowing blurb. *Jurassic Park: The Gift Edition* is in fact autographed not by Crichton but by an "Autopen," programmed with Crichton's signature and capable of replicating it up to 3,000 times a day.

Knopf's publicists were understandably reluctant to talk about Crichton's mechanical helpmeet. But Charles Hamilton, autograph dealer and author of the definitive Autopen exposé, *The Robot That Helped to Make a President: A Reconnaissance Into the Mysteries of John F. Kennedy's Signature*, offered us a conservative appraisal of Crichton's signature-by-proxy: "It adds no value, and also it annoys the hell out of people when they find out that they were cheated."



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"Toto, I don't think we're in Kansas anymore."

Roasted pork with rutabaga puree. Pepper seared venison with red cabbage kimchi

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Twelve Urban Pranks



1. Take a friend's triplets into a photocopy store. Walk up to the counter and exclaim irately, "Thanks for nothing!"

2. Set up a table on a busy sidewalk with a sign that has INCENSE crossed out and VACCINATIONS scrawled in its place.

3. Go to the Mayor's Office at the end of the day and claim you're the "Night Mayor."

4. Wave excitedly into a pharmacy's security camera, all the while leaping in the air and shouting, "Mom! It's me, Paul! I'm in New York!"

5. Pick out a person at random on the street and yell, "No *thank* you, Mr. Drug Dealer!"



6. Leap in front of a moving ambulance and, when hit, say, "How ironic!"

7. Build a snowman in the park. When someone walks by, shout at the snowman, "Ruth, stop this! It isn't funny anymore!"

8. Approach the vault room of a bank and ask everyone if you could please have some "alone time."

9. Call the Department of Consumer Affairs and complain about the Better Business Bureau.

10. Run into a police station and tell them about a vicious crime. After spending a few hours with the police artist, look at the sketch and say, "That's him! That's the man I saw on TV!"



11. Push a jam-packed grocery cart through a supermarket checkout line. After the cashier rings all the items up, say, "Wouldn't it be something to buy all that food?"

12. Be overheard at a pay phone shouting, "Oh, fine, keep your fuckin' Nobel Prize."

—Marshall Sella

Illustrations by John & Wendy

Celebrity Math Chapter 9



Fabio — Catherine Deneuve = Billy Ray Cyrus

—Mark O'Donnell

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the times

THEY ARE A-CHANGIN' BACK

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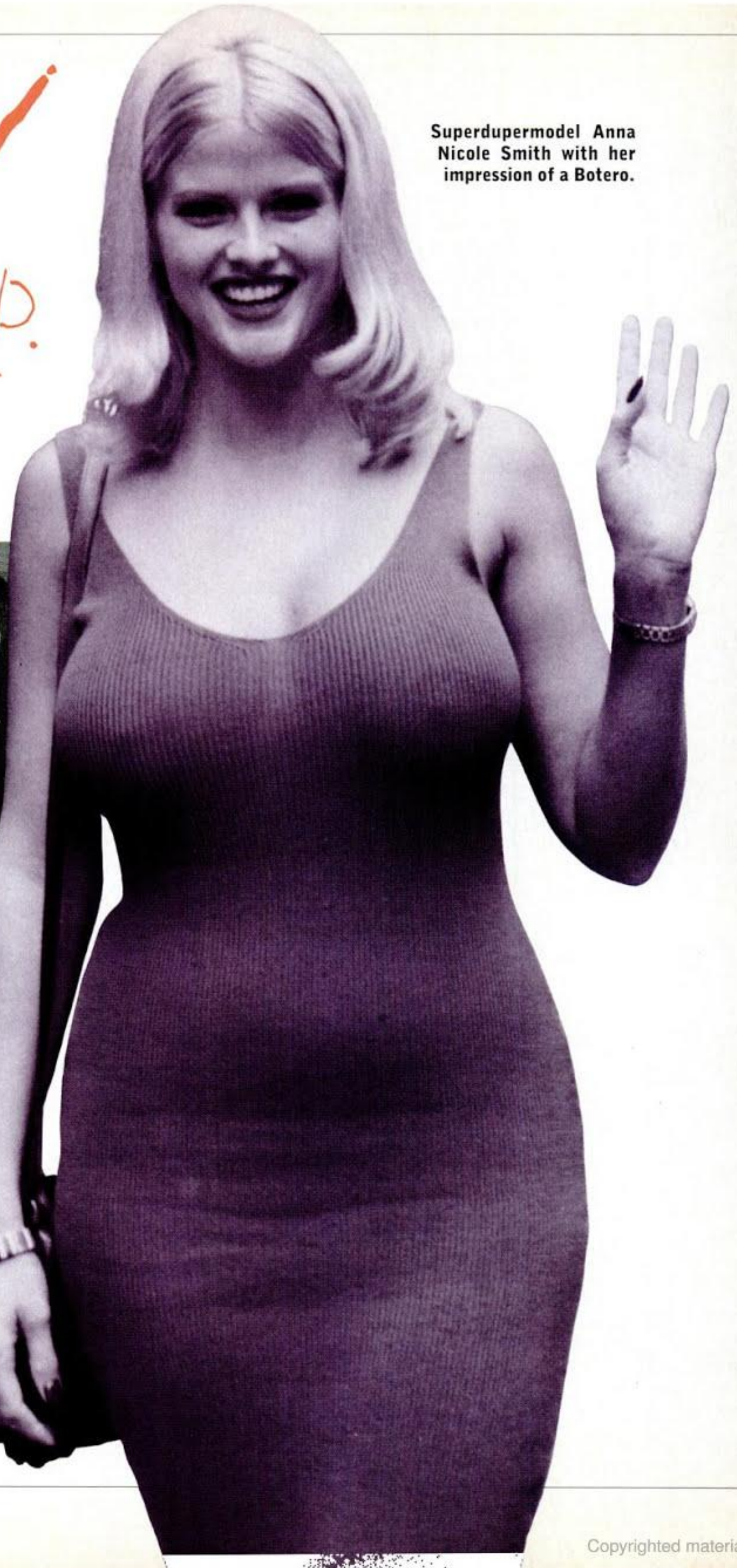
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Party Poop



Superdupermodel Anna Nicole Smith with her impression of a Botero.

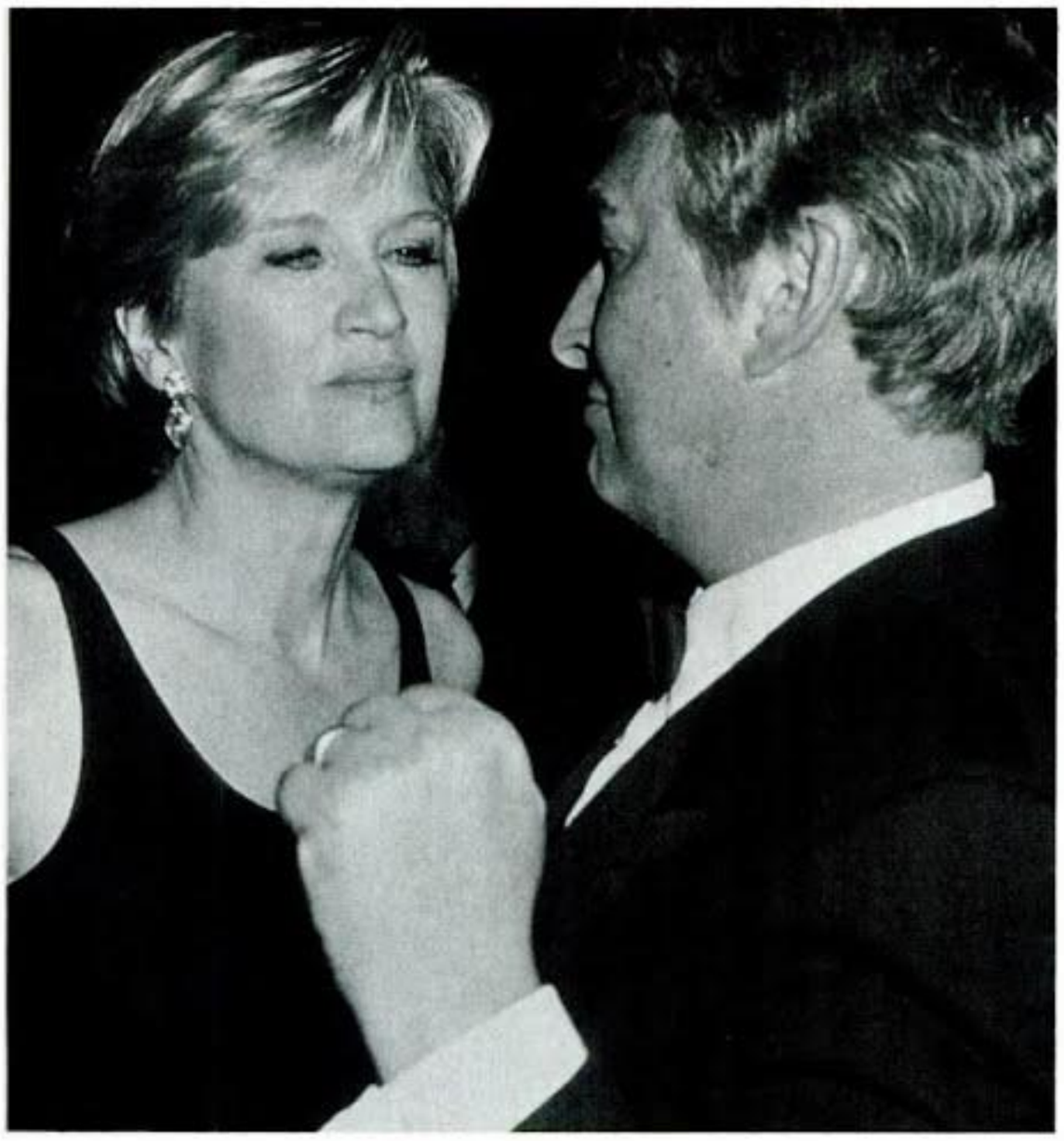
Sultan of romance Lyle Lovett, hanging on tight, practices the smile that made his bride famous.



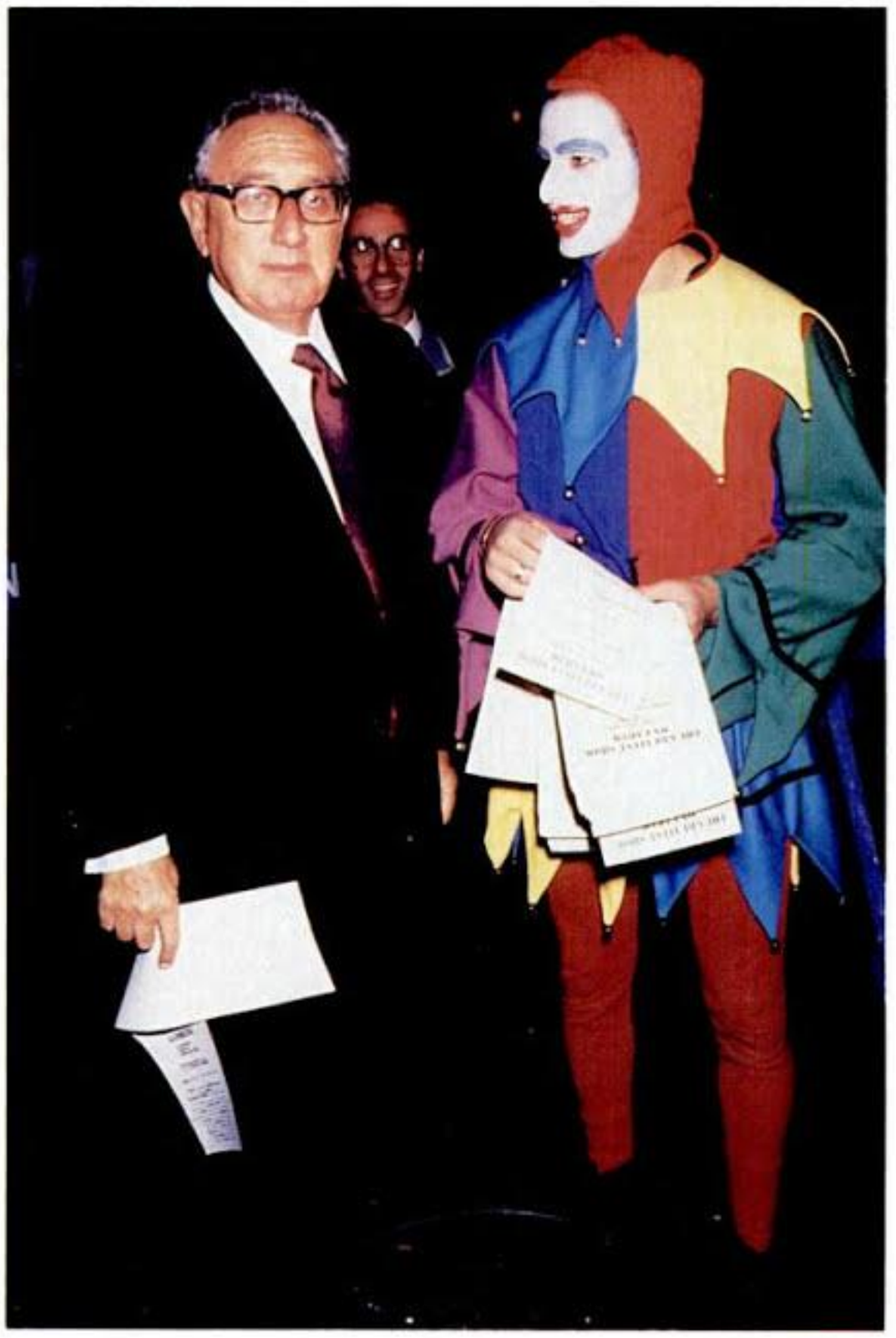


Thoroughly-average-guy Jerry Seinfeld avoids exchanging hand germs with girlfriend and legal voter Shoshanna Lonstein.

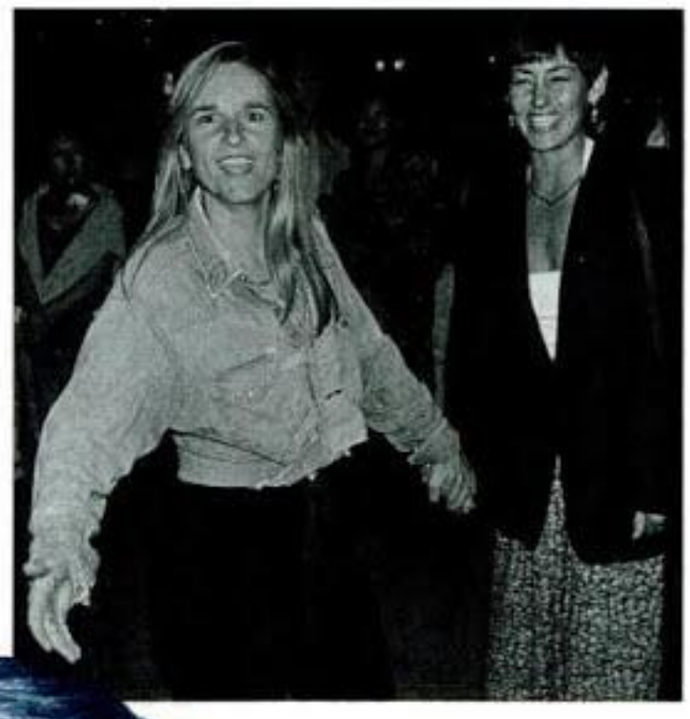
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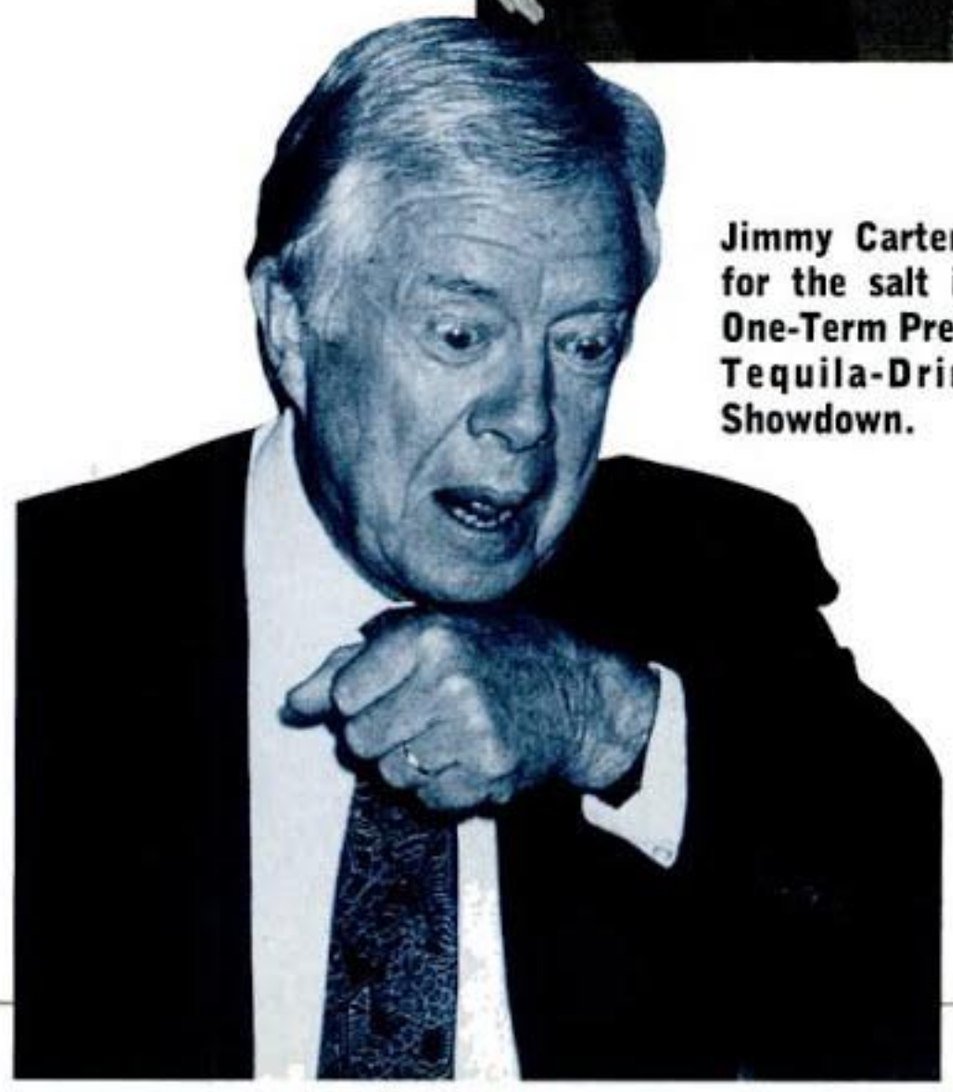
Her arms hopelessly pinned to her sides, plucky Diane Sawyer takes a left cross from mercurial husband Mike Nichols.



Even the Ghost of Carpet Bombings Past cannot distract socialite war criminal Henry Kissinger from his duties as senior statesman.



It took years of practice before the-other-lesbian-singer Melissa Etheridge mastered her one-handed bow-tying trick.



Jimmy Carter goes for the salt in the One-Term President Tequila-Drinking Showdown.





In the battle for superfluous-eyewear supremacy, *Details* magazine mascot Lenny Kravitz is easily bested by Oscar-nominated penis-bearer Jaye Davidson.

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How Celebrities Cost You, the Little Guy, Big Bucks Through the Fabulousness-Added Tax

IN ENGLAND, IF ONE OF FOUR DESIGNATED MEMBERS OF THE ROYAL FAMILY USES A PRODUCT THAT HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR AT LEAST THREE YEARS, THAT PRODUCT, WHETHER IT'S WEETABIX OR TWININGS TEA, IS AWARDED THE RIGHT TO CARRY THE ROYAL WARRANT: A GARISH SEAL WITH THE WORDING BY APPOINTMENT TO HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN. THIS EMBLEM IS INTENDED TO BEGUILE CONSUMERS INTO BUYING MORE OF THE PRODUCT. COMPANIES SIMPLY CLAMOR FOR THIS KIND OF REGAL LEGITIMACY: IF IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE QUEEN MOTHER, IT'S GOOD ENOUGH FOR ME.

By Carol Vinzant / Art by Paul Bachem

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If your tastes didn't change, everyone would grow up to be either a cowboy or an astronaut.



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Dewar's, "White Label". ©1993 Schieffelin & Somerset Co., NY, NY · Blended Scotch Whisky · 40% ALC/VOL (80 Proof)

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It's precisely this sort of servile adulation of the royal class that makes Americans scorn the British. For all their blathering on about how it's Americans who are really the ones interested in the royal family, not the British, it is the British who actually pay to *support* the royal family. Why, we wonder, does this otherwise sane nation continue to support a practically useless class of people? Why do they support this enigmatic cabal with their hard-earned tax money? Why do they allow this mysterious clan of ne'er-do-wells to avoid paying taxes wherever it can? Why would they want to eat the same kind of cereal as Prince Charles?

It is inconceivable that we, in the United States, would ever tolerate such a regressive endorsement system. *Or so we think.*

In fact, our Celebrity Class enjoys as many privileges of its position as does the royal family: The queen poses for their postage stamps; the king, Elvis, gets plastered on ours. The Brits read *Royalty* magazine; Americans devour the deceptively egalitarian *People*. The Brits have George V, father of George VI; we have Martin Sheen, father of Charlie.

Americans like to think that this Celebrity Class is a self-supporting California anomaly that has nothing to do with the rest of the country. If Michael Jackson wants to build a phantasmagoric estate with a vintage merry-go-round and ingenious child-enticing devices, so be it. If 20th Century Fox wants to squander $200-million on teen-angst connoisseur John Hughes, that's their bad business. If Madonna wants to buy a $5 million castle and paint it blood red and canary yellow, it's her money, we think.

But we are wrong. Through a labyrinthine system of advertising and endorsements, we the people pay for the daily upkeep of our Celebrity Class every bit as much as Britons support their royal oppressors. And we do so whether or not we approve of this class system, react to its endorsements or indeed ever watch television.

Consider these facts: The average adult spends $381 per year on cable television, videos, books, newspapers, magazines, records and movies. According to the Department of Labor, the average household also spends $492 annually on radios, sound equipment and new color TV sets needed to communicate and perpetuate the aura of the Celebrity Class. Americans as a whole shell out roughly $328 million for Broadway tickets per season and about $631 million per year on ghastly Broadway road shows. Half a billion tax dollars a year keep popular sports franchises in their hometowns. Americans spend a total of $13.6-billion on Los Angeles County tourism, $66 million in Chicago on Michael Jordan–related tourism and $20 million on celebrity-linked tourism in Tuolumne County, California, where westerns are filmed. All told, these expenditures work out to another $160 per household spent subsidizing the Celebrity Class. And that's not even counting all those $35 payouts to witness Woody Allen play the clarinet at Michael's Pub or $2,000 to bring home a framed Mickey Rourke poem.

In addition, Americans spend $41 billion on advertising each year, including $22.1 billion just for TV. Not all of that money goes directly to celebrities—but that's how much is currently required to support our onerous Celebrity Class system, with all of its entertainment by-products and attendant courtiers: agents, managers, flacks, personal trainers, bodyguards, lawyers to evade the normal course of justice, political advisers and other lackeys.

Tracing the money specifically is much harder, given that the numbers remain one of the few taboo topics in the entertainment business.

According to sources close to the glamorous Sprint pitchperson, Candice Bergen was paid $2 million for her first year as a

JERRY SEINFELD HAS BECOME THE SELF-SATISFIED SUN KING OF PRIME TIME, SQUIRING A BOSOMY SCHOOLGIRL ABOUT TOWN AND DISPOSING OF SNEAKERS WHEN THEY BECOME EVEN SLIGHTLY SCUFFED. SEINFELD OWES HIS DECADENT LIFESTYLE IN PART TO THE TARIFF HE LEVIES ON EVERY OWNER OF THE AMERICAN EXPRESS CARD.

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shill for the company. The arrangement calls for her not to make any other endorsements and to show up at Sprint's annual golf event, in much the same way that Prince Charles's arrangement calls for him not to make any politically embarrassing speeches and to occasionally show up somewhere on a horse. The Bergen source says that she probably now garners around $3-million a year for her efforts, but neither Bergen's publicist nor Sprint would confirm that estimate. Assuming that a chatty Sprint customer's monthly telephone bill comes to $100, he or she would be paying a levy of $12.78 annually for Sprint advertising in general and another 35.29 cents a year to support the lifestyle of the ventriloquist's moderately talented daughter. This surcharge is especially unfair to the millions of Republican Sprint users who sided with Dan Quayle in his feud with Bergen's fictional alter ego, Murphy Brown.

Unsuspecting consumers might also find themselves subsidizing Candice Bergen if they buy Clairol, which advertised on four out of five *Murphy Brown* episodes we tracked. Let's break out the numbers: If we assume that Clairol advertises on 80 percent of *Murphy Brown* episodes—and assume is what we must do, since neither networks nor advertisers will disclose how frequently an advertiser appears on a program—it would pay $11,648,000 annually to bankroll *Murphy Brown*. Since Clairol rakes in about $800 million in annual revenues, Americans would be forking over 1.45 cents on the wholesale dollar to finance *Murphy Brown*, an undisclosed percentage of which would be funneled to Bergen. Since retailers mark up beauty products in the neighborhood of 50 percent, retail consumers would pay a 0.97 percent Murphy Brown Tax on Clairol.

Then there's the Roseanne Tax, a regressive tax that hits hardest those who buy L'Oréal cosmetics. L'Oréal advertised on three of the eight *Roseanne* shows we monitored. L'Oréal cosmetics consumers are already paying 19.39 cents on the dollar for advertising placement. But if it consistently bought into *Roseanne* (at the rate we witnessed), L'Oréal would be paying $5.85-million annually to subsidize the uplifting working-class comedy. In other words, L'Oréal consumers are hit with a 0.56 per-

Story Problems

Each year local municipalities send out elaborate bills that clearly show homeowners how much they are spending, down to the cent, for each city service. Celebrities, however, levy their tariffs through a more byzantine and clandestine system than the typical school board. Calculating your Fabulousness-Added Tax is, therefore, a far more elusive pursuit than figuring out how much you spend for garbage collection.

To aid consumers in calculating the F.A.T. charges they incur through some typical purchases, SPY has provided a series of story problems to hone our readers' F.A.T. accounting skills.

1. For the 1991–92 season Patrick Ewing was paid $4 million to play for the New York Knicks. According to *Financial World* magazine, the Knicks had revenues of $45.7 million. Of these, media revenues were $12.7 million. Tickets were priced from $12 to $65. How much of the highest-priced ticket was Patrick Ewing's F.A.T.?
2. Suppose three celebrities bought three different brands of cars last year. Barbra bought a Lexus. Sandra purchased a Ford. Dom picked up a new red Honda Accord. Lexus spent $115-million on placing ads last year to sell 92,890 cars, according to *Adweek*'s Superbrands issue. Ford spent $404-million to sell 2,613,868 automobiles. Honda sold 393,477 Accords with $46-million in ad placement. Which car buyer would be paying the most to support his or her Celebrity Class?
3. Like most manufacturers of automotive products, Dodge advertises its pickup on the show *Home Improvement*. The ads cost $325,000 per 30-second spot. Dodge sold 521,971 pickups last year. If Dodge bought the expensive ads in one out of two episodes throughout the next calendar year, sold the same number of trucks and received no discount, how much F.A.T. would each Dodge pickup owner pay supporting *Home Improvement*?
4. ABC charges advertisers on *Roseanne* $24.75 per 1,000 female viewers aged 25–45 for a 30-second commercial. If you are a 27-year-old female, what is your time worth per spot? If there are six minutes of national commercials during the show, how much is one show's watching worth? One year's?

ANSWERS:

1. $5.69. Ewing collected $4 million of the Knicks' $45.7 million revenues, or 8.75273 percent of every dollar they brought in. If a ticket holder paid $65, he or she would be paying 8.7 percent of that, $5.69, to Ewing. The amount of media revenues is irrelevant.
2. Barbra. Lexus spent $1,238.02 per car; Ford spent $154.56; Honda Accord spent $166.91.
3. $16.19. ($325,000 x 26 = $8.45-million ÷ 521,971 = $16.19)
4. a) 2.475 cents per ad. ($24.75 ÷ 1,000 = $0.02475) b) 29.7 cents. (2.475 x 12 = 29.7) c) $15.44. (29.7 x 52 = 1544.4)

Celebrity Pyramid Scheme

JERRY SEINFELD

243 TV stars*

6,000 endorser-celebrities†

39,000 Actors' Equity members

77,000 AFTRA members‡

86,000 Screen Actors Guild members

1,687,700 Americans employed in film production and TV

$4.5 billion spent on attending movies

$9.1 billion network-TV advertising

$22.1 billion all-TV advertising

$41 billion all-media advertising budget

*Known names found in week's perusal of *TV Guide*

†According to endorsement brokers at Celebrity Source

‡American Federation of TV and Radio Artists members

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ROSEANNE ARNOLD WOULD DEARLY LOVE US TO BELIEVE HER CAREFULLY CRAFTED IMAGE AS A CHAMPION OF WORKING MEN AND WOMEN. THE TRUTH IS, HOWEVER, THAT ROSEANNE IMPOSES UPON HER BELEAGUERED FANS ONE OF THE MOST REGRESSIVE TAXES IMAGINABLE: A 0.37 PERCENT SURCHARGE ON ALL PRODUCTS SOLD BY L'ORÉAL.

cent Roseanne Tax (for wholesale; 0.37 percent with a 50 percent retail markup).

Other cosmetics users pay an estimated 0.95 percent F.A.T. on wholesale Revlon products (0.63 percent with a 50 percent retail markup) for the prestige of Cindy Crawford and Claudia Schiffer, who suck in $1 million and $1.6 million respectively for their Revlon endorsements.

One of the most troubling aspects of the hidden celebrity taxation system is the public's inadvertent subsidizing of unacceptable people like Ted Danson. During the final season of *Cheers*, Danson personally levied a surcharge of approximately 22.5 percent on any advertising on the show, not including network profits. He was paid $450,000 for each episode, which NBC bought for an estimated $2 million. That year, *Cheers* commanded $262,500 on average for 30 seconds of advertising and charged $650,000 in its last two hours of death throes. Since Budweiser bought two of those last-night promos, and if we assume it bought as many as one in eight shows during the year, it would follow that Budweiser spent about $3 million on *Cheers* last year, or (not including network profits) $675,000 directly on the man who, for the most memorable moment of the season, lifted his toupee. Since Bud sold 43.1 million barrels of beer last year, that would work out to 1.5 cents per barrel (330 cans) for Danson.

But if you're buying that beer, your F.A.T. dollar is probably being funneled primarily to professional athletes rather than to sitcom alumni. Anheuser-Busch spent $165 million on sports advertising last year. If the average male beer drinker consumed only Anheuser-Busch products for a year, he would be paying a $1.26 tariff to the baseball industry (about half of sports-industry tariffs end up in the hands of celebrity athletes); an 84 cent tariff to the NFL; a 42 cent tariff to the NBA; a 25 cent tariff to ice hockey; and an unspecified sum to purchase the soul of WGN announcer–Cub fan–Bud man Harry Caray. If that same Budweiser aficionado were to purchase a beer—a Bud, of course—at Wrigley Field, as much as 30 cents would be going directly into the pockets of aging, creaky, near-the-end-of-the-line Ryne Sandberg, since Ryne exacts about a 10.93 percent tax on all Cubs revenues.

The benchmark here (in another part of Chicagoland) is—and may always be—the Michael Jordan Surtax. You could—until recently—buy a Bulls ticket for $19 to $300, and Jordan would pocket between $1.40 and $22.20. But even if you lived thousands of miles away from the Windy City, you would be paying fealty to Jordan every time you bought a pair of his favorite brand of running or basketball shoes. Given that Jordan reportedly rakes in $20 million a year from that source, he exacts a 0.58 percent F.A.T. on that entire line of merchandise. That works out to a whopping 23.45 cents on an $80 pair of shoes, assuming a generous 100 percent retail markup. On Gatorade, Jordan exacts a 0.18 percent tax, and there are also Jordan celebrity surcharges on products he hawks for Hanes, McDonald's, Wheaties and General Motors. And then there are hidden F.A.T.'s, such as the $2.5 million the city of Chicago spent for security on nights it feared the city would riot over a third Bulls championship, or 83.33 cents per resident.

Americans also pay for their Celebrity Class with their time. The average household spends 49 hours per week watching TV. Television networks absorb $4 billion annually in prime-time revenue alone. Dividing that sum by the number of American adults reveals that a year's worth of TV watching is worth $19.65 per adult. But, of course, viewers see none of that money. Instead they actually have to pay that much extra on the consumer goods they buy. And, if any of the basic tenets of advertising are true, they will buy the prod-

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TICKET TO DERIDE

Sports analysts and apologists are forever trying to argue that skyrocketing professional athletes' salaries have nothing to do with skyrocketing sports-ticket prices.

"There is no relationship whatsoever between ticket prices and owners' costs," economist Gerald Scully told *USA Today*.

Most sports teams are privately held or are so immersed in a multinational that discerning financial streams is impossible. Cubs money is intertwined with *Tribune* sales. Cardinals proceeds get mixed in with beer and pretzel funds. Until last year the Boston Celtics were the sole publicly held, publicly traded professional team. Because of the Celtics' corporate purity—since the team was not part of a large conglomerate—it was fairly simple to deduce from SEC filings where ticket money was spent. Last year, however, Boston Celtics Limited Partnership merged with TV and radio, miscegenating ticket and TV dollars. According to the team's SEC filing, a hefty amount of the ticket price supports expensive reruns, notably those of *Roseanne*, *Cosby* and *Married...With Children*.

The trail of Celtics ticket dollars is more tortuous under this new deal. If the Celtics follow the path of other franchises, it will soon be impossible to make all but the most rudimentary extrapolation of how much certain players get from a ticket. —*C.V.*

$40 TICKET TO BOSTON CELTICS' 1991–92 SEASON

$5.82 Larry Bird*
$2.88 Kevin McHale*
$2.75 Reggie Lewis*
$2.47 Robert Parish
$1.15 Kevin Gamble
$1.08 Brian Shaw*†
$0.78 Joe Kleine*
$0.74 Ed Pinckney*
$0.58 Dee Brown
$0.55 Stojko Vrankovic*§
$0.45 John Bagley*
$0.43 Rick Fox
$0.26 Rickey Green*§

$19.94 Total player salary

$2.40 NBA gate assessment (6 percent)
$25.12 Team and game expenses, including:
- $1.20 Arena
- $0.60 Coaches
- $19.94 Team salary

$3.74 General and administrative, including:
- $0.22 Red Auerbach (in lifetime consulting contract that is assumed by his wife upon his death)
- $0.96 Remaining executive compensation
- $0.19 Pension
- $1.01 NBA pre-pension plan

$0.89 Selling and promotion (includes physical ticket, marketing staff)
$1.25 Playoffs
$0.13 Amortization of NBA franchise and other intangibles
$0.11 Net interest expense
$6.36 Profit (shareholders get $6.29 of this)

$45 TICKET TO BOSTON CELTICS' 1992–93 SEASON

$1.84 Robert Parish
$1.83 Kevin McHale*
$1.74 Reggie Lewis*
$1.20 Larry Bird*‡
$0.98 Sherman Douglas
$0.86 Xavier McDaniel
$0.62 Kevin Gamble
$0.60 Joe Kleine*
$0.60 Ed Pinckney*
$0.45 Dee Brown
$0.44 Stojko Vrankovic*‡
$0.37 Dino Radja
$0.34 Rick Fox
$0.34 Michael Smith*‡
$0.28 John Bagley*
$0.26 Alaa Abdelnaby
$0.07 Kenny Battle*§
$0.07 Bart Kofoed*§
$0.07 Marcus Webb*§
$0.07 A. J. Wynder*‡
$0.02 Joe Wolf*§

$13.05 Total player salary

$2.70 NBA gate assessment
$14.52 Team and game expenses, including:
- $0.66 Arena
- $0.54 Coaches
- $13.05 Team salary

$7.27 Amortization of broadcast rights
$4.74 TV and radio operating expenses
$5.44 General and administrative, including:
- $0.67 Merger
- $0.83 Celtics executive compensation (Red Auerbach gets $0.14 of this)
- $0.77 Management fee
- $0.32 Pension and pre-pension plans

$4.27 Selling and promotion
$0.32 Playoffs
$0.46 Depreciation
$0.66 Amortization of NBA franchise and other intangibles
$1.88 Net interest expense
$2.74 Profit (shareholders get $2.70 of this)

FOOTNOTES
*No longer plays for Celtics
†Traded before the 1992 All-Stars for Sherman Douglas, who got $1,250,000. After that Douglas was getting $1.03 a ticket and the player share was $19.89.
‡Did not play during 1992–93 but received compensation
§Played only part of season

MONEY FOR NOTHING

By and large, the British public does not mind paying to support heroic members of the royal family, such as the Queen Mother, who gallantly refused to abandon London during the blitz, or Queen Elizabeth, who has capably presided over the fortunes of the British empire during a particularly difficult time in its history. But English people do find it annoying that much of their tax money goes to underwrite the antics of the witless Prince Charles, the drab Princess Margaret and the Hogarthian Sarah Ferguson.

An analogous situation exists in the United States. The average American does not mind paying an F.A.T. to support such heroic sports figures as Larry Bird, Barry Bonds, Michael Jordan, Wayne Gretzky and Kevin McHale. But Americans find it positively infuriating when their tax money goes to prop up pathetic losers such as Joe Kleine and Frank Viola, or chronic underachievers such as Doug Drabek, Bobby Bonilla and Danny Tartabull.

MONEY FOR NOTHING

Doug Drabek: Earned $1.30 on every $12 Houston Astros ticket in 1993; won 9 games and lost 18. Also choked away 2–0 lead to Atlanta Braves in ninth inning of game seven of 1992 National League championship series. Known in Houston as Doug Drawback.

Patrick Ewing: Earned $6.56 on top New York Knicks ticket in 1992–93, the year his team threw away a 2–0 lead over the Chicago Bulls in the NBA semifinals; usually AWOL during the big games.

Joe Kleine: Stole 64 cents from every Boston Celtics patron purchasing a courtside seat in 1992–93; a legendary stiff who has never come close to winning a championship ring.

Bobby Bonilla: Raked in $1.05 on every $15 New York Mets ticket in 1993; led team to worst record in majors.

Frank Viola: Snagged 72 cents on every $14 ticket bought by long-suffering Boston Red Sox fans; a washed-up bum.

MONEY WELL SPENT

Michael Jordan: Eked out a meager $1.40 from the low-end ticket and only $22.20 from the courtside seat; led team to three championships.

Wayne Gretzky: Pocketed from 89 cents to $24.93 a head from L.A. Kings fans.

Dan Marino: Took home $2.83 from Miami Dolphins fans who paid $30 for their seats.

Roger Clemens: Earned 71 cents from each attending Bosox fan in the most pricey seats.

Ruben Sierra: Took home a mere $1.39 from top-paying Oakland A's spectators.

Barry Bonds and Will Clark: Obtained $1.75 and $1.60 respectively from San Francisco Giants fans in the $17.50 seats.

Cecil Fielder: Pocketed $1.78 from top Detroit Tigers ticket.

—*C.V.*



ucts they have seen advertised on the shows they watch.

If Americans had even a soupçon of consumer sophistication, they would think twice about buying products pitched on TV shows or goods endorsed by celebrities. Instead they cherish these products. Celebrity endorsement, far from being a symbol of credibility, should be a telltale sign that a product's price has been gratuitously inflated.

Celebrities are not oblivious to the fact that they reap huge percentages right off the top of their projects. In fact, it is many a celebrity's ultimate goal and mark of success. Madonna wisely brokered a deal to snare $60 million from Time Warner against 20 percent of sales of her merchandise. For *Batman*, Jack Nicholson took a 15 percent tax on studio take, while Michael Keaton levied a creditable 8 percent. Arnold Schwarzenegger claimed 17.5 percent of *Twins*.

While Americans allow themselves to be taken for a longer ride each year by their celebrities, England has made bold moves in recent years to curb the powers of both its celebrity and royal classes. Just last year the queen finally agreed to pay her taxes. In the U.S., in marked contrast, the list of celebrity tax scofflaws continues to grow. Willie Nelson is the most unabashed tax delinquent of them all. Of the $17 million the IRS claimed he owed, he begrudgingly consented to pay $9 million. Nelson would have preferred that his countrymen absorb his entire share and tried to make the IRS seem evil for not letting each American household pick up an 18.05 cent burden. With his new deal, the average American household only had to pay an 8.5 cent Willie Nelson Tax for the amount he declined to pay. In stiffing his countrymen, Nelson was merely following in the long, proud tradition established by such famous tax-evading celebrities as Chuck Berry, Pete Rose, Aldo Gucci, designer Albert Nipon, drummer Buddy Rich, Joe Louis and Abbott and Costello.

Since the time of Queen Victoria, members of the British royal class have been prohibited from sharing their inane political views with the public. They still feel free to promote harmless environmental and medical causes and regularly pop into hospitals to cheer up the wretched, but except for the occasional foolhardy GATT Treaty remark by Prince Charles, they stay out of the public forum. In the U.S., on the other hand, our celebrities have de-evolved. They have violated their tacit sealed-lips arrangement with the public by becoming ludicrously outspoken. They used to feel comfortable in an inspirational hospital-visiting role, but today they insist on being taken seriously as committed political activists. It is as if they feel a sense of noblesse oblige to share their views.

That's the charitable interpretation. The more hardheaded one would be that America's aristocracy has moved beyond a merely decorative role in society. Celebritocrats like Barbra Streisand are now moving to consolidate their prominence into real political power. Especially when celebrity is increasingly hereditary, this represents the emergence of a new segment of the ruling class.

Two hundred years ago, the Founding Fathers threw off the chains of tyranny by refusing to pay royal taxes on tea, coffee, sugar, stamps, everything. Look where it has gotten us. Every time we respond to Jerry Seinfeld's pitch for a credit card that supposedly reduces revolving debt, we betray the principles of the American Revolution. Ditto when we buy into Candice Bergen's shtick about saving money by using Sprint, or Julia Louis-Dreyfus's inducements to slash hair-care costs by using Clairol. When Cybill Shepherd encourages American women to buy L'Oréal because they're worth it, the question you should really consider is not whether *you're* worth the extra cost of her product, but whether Cybill Shepherd is.

PSEUDOPOPULIST TROUBADOUR WILLIE NELSON FOUND THE TIME TO DUET WITH JULIO IGLESIAS BUT NEVER QUITE GOT AROUND TO PAYING THE $17 MILLION THE IRS CLAIMED HE OWED. NELSON EVENTUALLY AGREED TO PAY $9 MILLION, LEAVING HIS COUNTRYMEN TO ABSORB THE REST OF HIS DEBT.

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SPY WEAR BY PHONE

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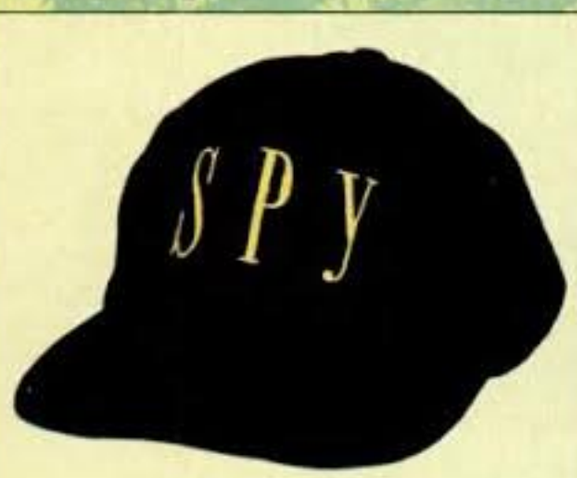
SPY Cotton Cap $13.95

Unbleached 100% cotton cap with red SPY logo, brim and adjustable strap. One size fits all.



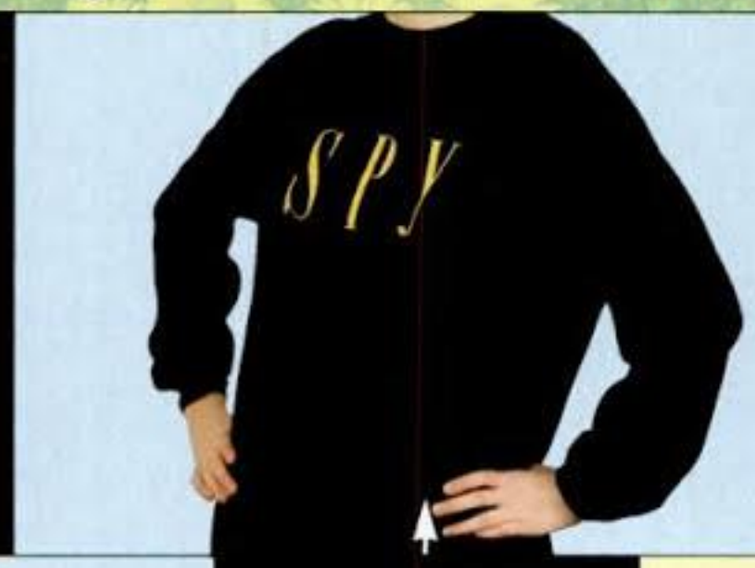
also available...

The perfect tees, a heavy-duty sweatshirt and a classic hat!



The New SPY Sweatshirt $39.95

Natural 95% cotton heavyweight crossweave sweatshirt with embroidered red logo. M, L, XL

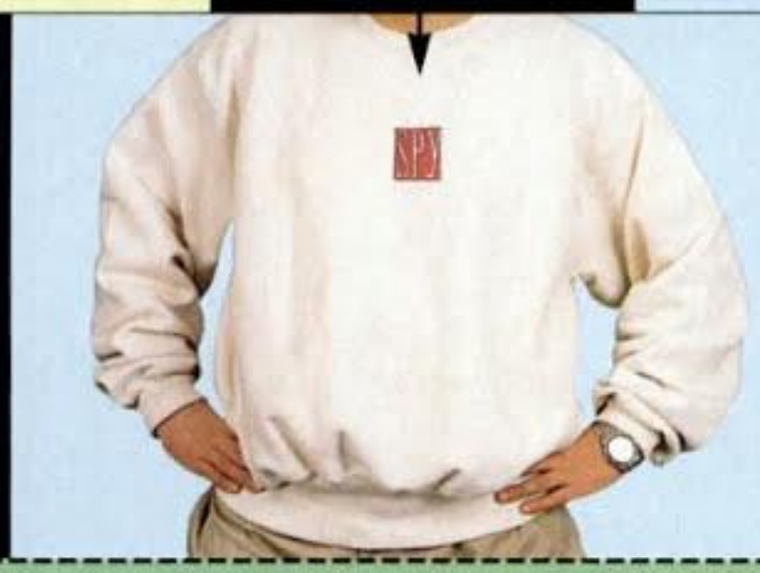


Short-Sleeve Beefy-T $12

100% cotton, comes in black with classic yellow SPY logo, or white with new red SPY logo. M, L, XL

Classic SPY Hat $12.95

Black 100% cotton cap with classic yellow SPY logo and adjustable leather strap. One size fits all.



Long-Sleeve Beefy-T $15

100% cotton, comes in black with classic yellow SPY logo, or white with new red SPY logo. M, L, XL



QTY	ITEM	BLACK	WHITE	SIZE (S)	$
	The SPY Sweatshirt	■			
	Long Sleeve Beefy-T				
	Short-Sleeve Beefy-T				
	The Unbleached SPY Hat	■		■	
	Classic Black SPY Hat		■	■	
TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED (plus $2 shipping & handling)					

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Credit Card Number Exp. Date

Signature

Tel. (daytime)

Method of Payment:

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Enclose a check or money order (no cash accepted; N.Y. residents include 8.25% sales tax). Specify quantity, detach coupon and mail to SPY Wear, The SPY Building, 5 Union Square West, New York, N.Y. 10003. Offer limited to the U.S. and Canada. Canadian residents, please pay additional U.S. $2.50 per item. Good only while supply lasts. Please allow 4–6 weeks for delivery. For subscription information dial 1-800-333-8128.

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HACK-O-MATIC

How to Write the All-Purpose Mall Story * by Joe Queenan

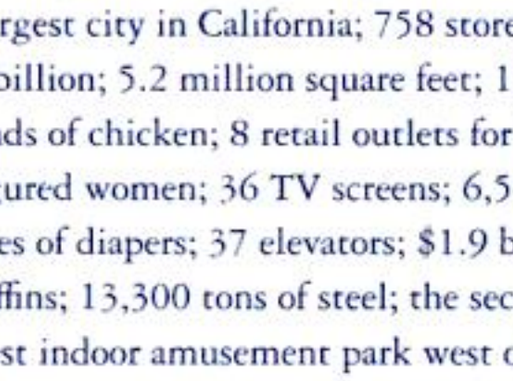
In preparing this issue, SPY originally intended to include a thoughtful story about gigantic malls, such as the 350-store behemoth in Torrance, California, that seem to serve as a powerful metaphor for, and even indictment of, contemporary Californian life. Alas, the mall story has already been done. As David Guterson pointed out in a startlingly interesting August 1993 Harper's story, even before he started researching his piece about the Mall of America—the second-largest mall in North America—11,000 articles had already been written about the Bloomington, Minnesota–based mall, not to mention "hundreds of thousands, maybe a million" stories about the West Edmonton Mall, according to spokesperson Susan Taylor, as well as countless stories about the other 2,000 malls in North America.

These figures seem to indicate a tremendous waste of human resources in the newsrooms of America, as reporters fall over themselves to write exactly the same mall story over and over again. To facilitate the production of all future mall stories, we offer our fellow journalists this handy "Build Your Own Mall Story" Easy-to-Assemble Kit. *Illustrations by Chris Ware*

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All mall stories must contain a bevy of statistics that have been stripped of any meaningful context. Choose seven (7) possibilities from the following list: $1.1 billion; $1.2 billion; $1.3 billion; 12,750 parking spaces; on the Friday morning after Thanksgiving; the fourth-largest city in California; 758 stores; $1.6 billion; 5.2 million square feet; 13,000 pounds of chicken; 8 retail outlets for full-figured women; 36 TV screens; 6,548 changes of diapers; 37 elevators; $1.9 billion; 8 coffins; 13,300 tons of steel; the second-largest indoor amusement park west of the Mississippi; 138 restaurants; 20 movie screens; 7 places to buy pierogi; come Labor Day, twice the size of Duluth; two ice-skating rinks; 140,000 hot dogs; 8 times the population of Fargo; 2,345 Advils; $1.93-billion; 4.2 million square feet of retail space; 250,000 Japanese tourists; 88 football fields laid end to end; $2.1 billion.



All mall stories must contain at least one (1) reference to shadowy Irani financiers who started out in the rug business before drifting into the international megamall business. Hint that the shah's money may be involved somewhere.



All mall stories must contain at least two (2) paragraphs discussing the megamall as a postmodern attempt to rethink the very concept of public space and perhaps reinvent the nineteenth-century farmer's market in the age of polystyrene. Choose two (2) from among the following: Lewis Mumford, Witold Rybczynski, Paul Goldberger, the guy who wrote *Lonely Crowd*.



All mall stories must contain at least one (1) reference to Robert Moses, Frank Lloyd Wright and/or Le Corbusier, each of whom became famous by dealing with the problems of people and space.



All mall stories must contain at least four (4) of the following words or phrases: *herculean*, *Gargantuan*, *leviathan*, *Promethean*, *Brobdingnagian*, *monstrous*, *titanic*, *epic*, *the mother of all malls*.



All mall stories must express good-natured astonishment at the ingenious locomotive devices designed by mall operators to facilitate transportation from the southeastern access point in Phase I to the northwestern causeway in Phase III. Choose two (2) possibilities from the following list: miniature railroad systems evoking halcyon images of youth; dainty submarines; rented bicycles; glass-enclosed elevators; colorful tandems; retooled golf carts; sturdy rickshas hauled by beefy western-Canadian coeds.



All mall stories must contain at least one (1) reference to Melvin Simon & Associates, the people who actually build these things.



All mall stories must contain at least three (3) of the following references: the Colosseum of Rome; the Grand Canyon; the Leaning Tower of Pisa; the Great Pyramids; the Taj Mahal; the Eighth Wonder of the World; the Tower of Babel; the Great Wall of China; Pompeii; the Vehicle Assembly Building at the Kennedy Space Center turned on its side.



All mall stories must attempt to put modern malls in context by referring to the Greek agora, the Roman forum, the Persian bazaar and/or *Les Halles de Paris*.



All mall stories must contain at least two (2) plays-on-words that involve the word *mall*. Choose from among the following: *m'all in one*; *m'all's well that ends well*; *malled alive!*; *mall palls*; *much mall-igned*.



All mall stories must mention the reporter's obligatory visit to the one-size-fits-all, nondenominational chapel hidden away in the darkest nether regions of Phase III. Mention that the chapel seems a bit out of place in a heathen environment such as a mall, but point out that Jesus preached among lepers, prostitutes and Pharisees. If backed into a corner, go with the old *Out of the depths have I cried to thee, O Lord* routine.

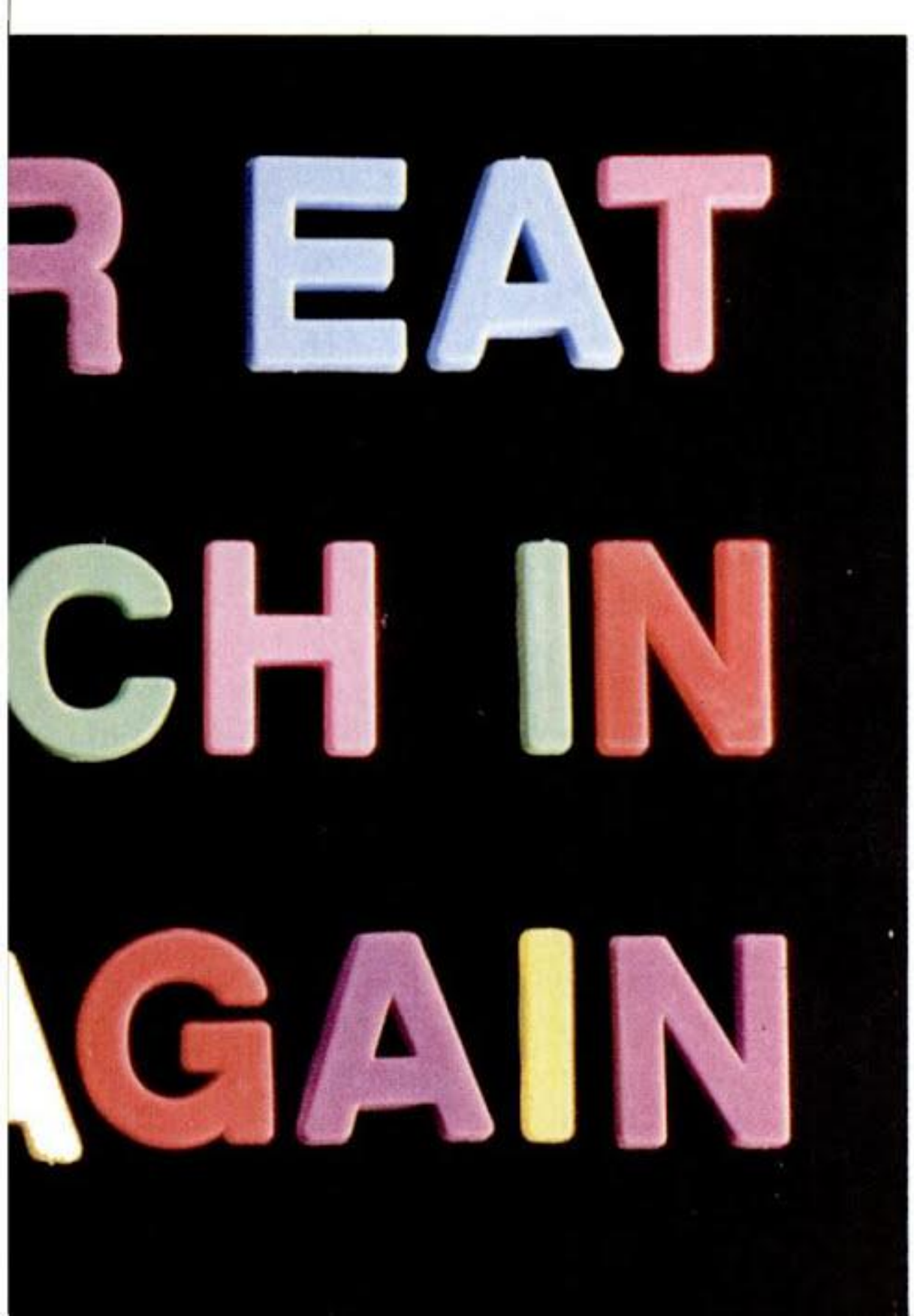
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YOU'LL NEVE
SCHOOL LUN
THIS TOWN A



For involved Los Angeles parents, the true moment of triumph comes not with the arrival of the acceptance letter from the power kindergarten you've plotted to get your kid into from the moment of conception but several weeks later, when the class list arrives. You'll skip all the Caitlins, Dustins and Dylans and go straight to the names and addresses of their parents. The first of many readings will be for celebrities—the Spielbergs, Schwarzeneggers, Eisners, Ovitzes, etc. Find a famous name and your heart beats faster. Your kid may become best friends with their kid. **by Ralph Gardner Jr.**



Getting your child into the right L.A. kindergarten has never been more important than it is today. You can have the Range Rover and the converted barn in Aspen, but unless your kid also attends a kindergarten that makes people gulp at cocktail parties, your success is as hollow as Thumper's log.

The big difference between getting your child into kindergarten in Los Angeles and in other power capitals, such as New York and Washington, D.C., is that in those cities academic potential—to the extent that it's possible to measure such a thing in a four-year-old—counts for something. Not much, but something. In L.A., admissions officials employ more empirical criteria to cull the seedlings. These include how well you know Mike Ovitz and whether you offer to buy the school a new campus during your interview.

The application process kicks off in September—not September of the year you're applying to kindergarten, but several Septembers earlier, as you maneuver to get your toddler, who may still be teething, into a "feeder" preschool. That's a school that places him or her on an unwavering trajectory toward the Ivy League, the fear and loathing of his or her peers and a front-page obituary in *The New York Times*.

But winning a place in a premier preschool is no piece of cake, either. Friends and relatives whose children already attend must give blood for you. "Meryl called on

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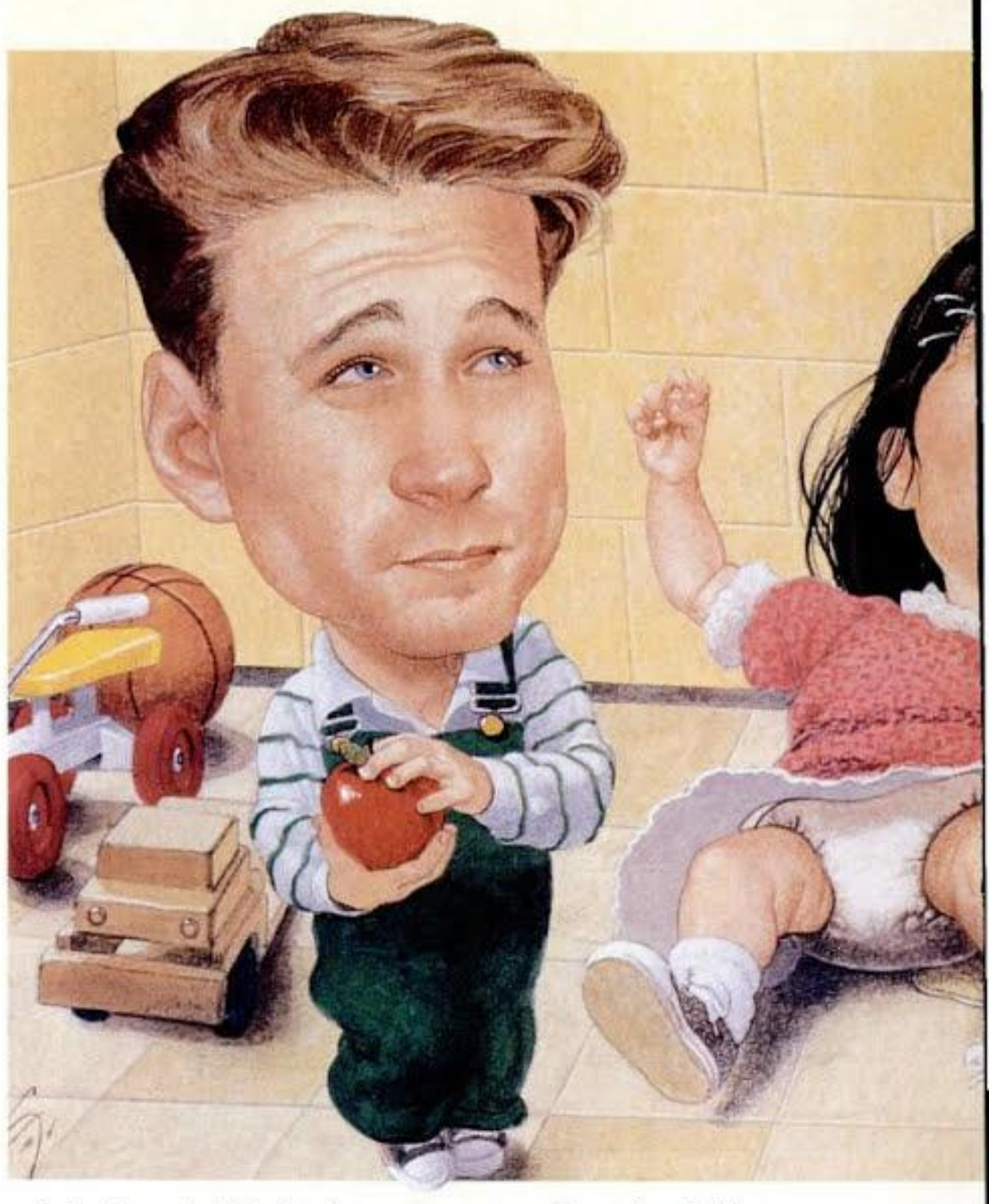
our behalf," said actor John Shea, referring to Meryl Streep, whose children attended Circle of Children in Santa Monica, also known as "the preschool to the stars." Other Circle parents include Steven Spielberg and Kate Capshaw, and Arnold Schwarzenegger and Maria Shriver.

Preschools present excellent networking opportunities. There are picnics, pasta suppers, field trips to the zoo and the centerpiece of the school social season—the annual fundraising auction. The stars come out "especially if it's at the home of their current producer or director or an agent they'd like to know," said a Circle mom. Last season's auction was held at the Brentwood mansion of software mogul Peter Norton. Bidding was spirited for such items as autographed *Jurassic Park* paraphernalia, donated by the Spielberg-Capshaws; dinner at Schatzie on Main, donated by owner Schwarzenegger; and a Caribbean cruise for two, courtesy of Circle dad Yakov Smirnoff, with Yakov coming along. The auction raised nearly $50,000 in no time at all. "The presidents of studios and major movie stars and heads of talent agencies are all sending their kids to this school and supporting it by raising lots of money," Shea explained. "It's like a seat you pass along."

But after a couple of carefree years hanging around the playground with your camcorder, the time comes to focus on how you're going to get your kid into kindergarten if the preschool isn't associated with one, as Circle isn't. Frankly, however, celebrities don't have to worry about how well their child's preschool has prepared them for the cutthroat competition of academe. Norman and Lyn Lear applied to three power kindergartens for their son—Crossroads, John Thomas Dye and Curtis—and got into all three.

The odds aren't as good for lawyers, doctors or accountants. "If you're not in the film industry, you just don't count," lamented a Circle mom who moved to Los Angeles from New York with her husband, a money manager, and whose bright, well-adjusted and attractive five-year-old was rejected at every school where he applied. "If you're incredibly, incredibly wealthy, that counts, too."

New Yorkers declare their breeding in school interviews by dropping the names of people who live in their Park Avenue co-op building, or whom they went to Yale with, and whose children already attend the school. In Washington, it's preferable if your family arrived with the Cleveland rather than the Clinton administration. And in San Francisco, new money is fine as long as it acts like old money. Even comedians there are low-key. The board of directors at the Town School for Boys, where Robin Williams's son is in first grade, is too discreet to ask him to do shtick for the school. "We're very, very sensitive about asking him for anything," said a member of the board. "He's given money to the school like everybody else, but he's by no means the biggest donor."



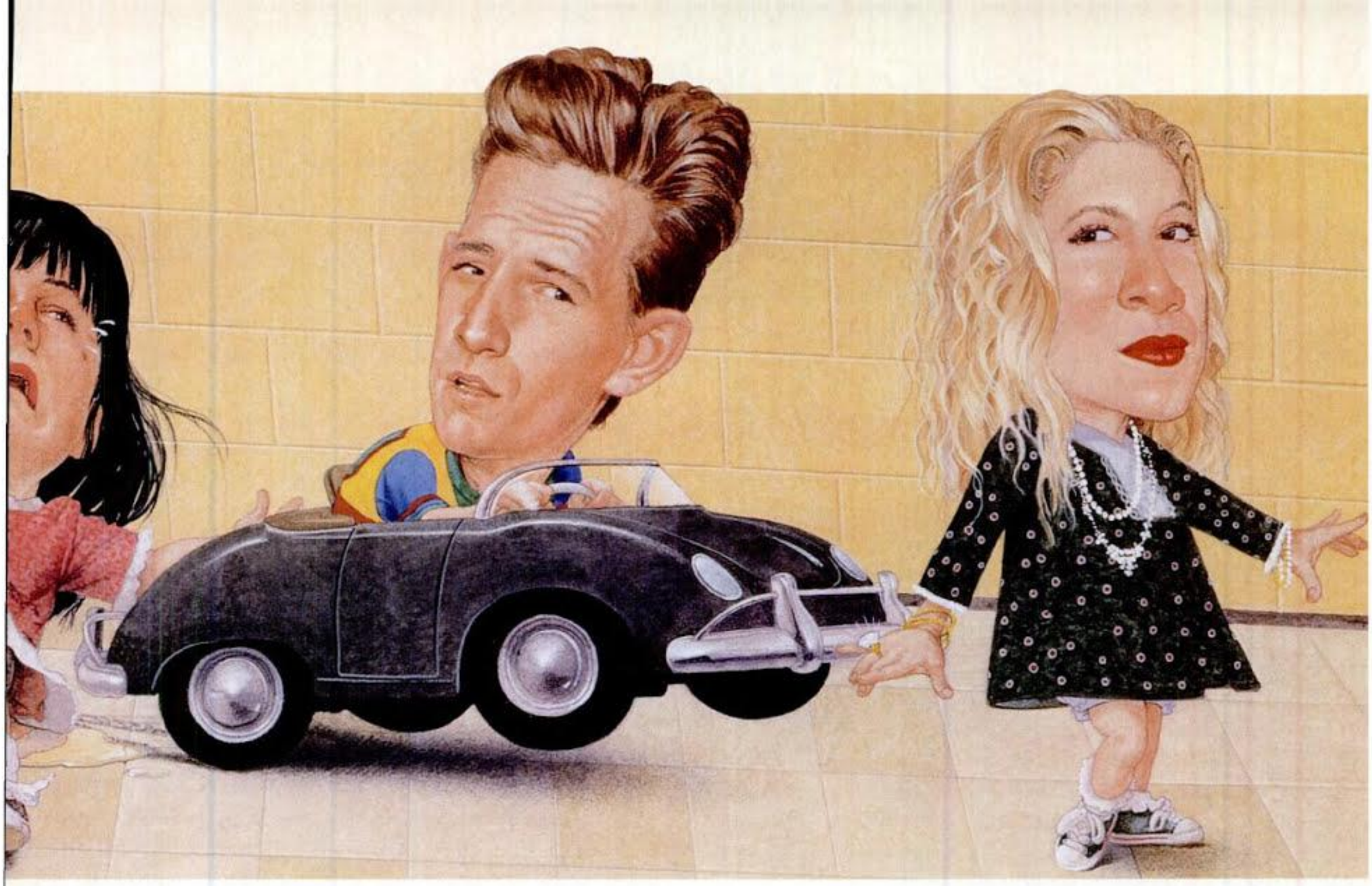
In those cities, the first decision parents have to make is whether to send their child to public or private school and, if private, whether single-sex or coeducational. In Los Angeles, where the middle class is fleeing the public schools like extras in a Godzilla movie, the great divide is between "traditional" and "nontraditional." In the nontraditional category, preferred by the artistic branch of the movie industry, is the Center for Early Education, founded by psychoanalysts. Parents here include Jamie Lee Curtis, Jack Nicholson and megachef Wolfgang Puck. Then there's the Crossroads School, whose funky campus overlooking the Santa Monica Freeway is a magnet for three-legged dogs and, at one time or another, the children of Barbra Streisand, O. J. Simpson, Bob Dylan and Robert De Niro. "These are schools," explained one observer, "where they can't guarantee whether your child will be able to read or write when they get out, but their sense of self-esteem will be firmly in place."

"The presidents of networks and studio guys said they would call for me and get my kid into these schools," John Shea said. "I found out people were applying because the parking lot was a good place to make deals."

Instead, Shea said, he was "so repulsed" that he decided to go the traditional route. After some home teaching

The stars come out for the school auction "especially if it's at the home of their producer or director"

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he got his son into the Carlthorp School, where, he contends, "they didn't care that Grant Tinker wrote me a letter of recommendation." Other schools in the traditional category include John Thomas Dye, Hollywood's answer to a New England prep school—where Mike Ovitz sends his kids—and the tony Curtis School, where some young scholars are rumored to show up for class with bodyguards.

A word about the odds. Every school gives priority to siblings, especially those whose families, to quote a memo to prospective parents from the Center for Early Education, "have demonstrated a level of support, commitment, involvement and participation within our community." In other words, if you want your second child to be guaranteed a spot, it wouldn't hurt if you paid to have the nap room redecorated.

Minority students are the objects of frenzied recruiting and reward the school for its effort by starring in its promotional literature. A solid candidate would be somebody like the foster child of one Hollywood power couple. The mother, who hasn't lost her sense of perspective, one day told a fellow mom at Circle of Children while shooting the breeze at the school playground that she "thought he'd get in under the category of 'extremely wealthy black child.'"

But if you're none of the above—just a well-meaning middle-class family with a healthy, happy child—your chances don't look good. The director of admissions at John Thomas Dye cast a pall over an otherwise festive prospective-parents' night by announcing that 400 "little muffins" would be competing for 16 openings. The Center for Early Education has fewer than 10 openings a year and 300 applicants.

How to beat the odds? Knowing the head of the Creative Artists Agency doesn't hurt. Ovitz, approached through a go-between, agreed to help a father get his child into John Thomas Dye on the condition that that person do something about getting Ovitz into the Bel-Air Country Club, according to a reliable source. He also made a call to get the children of an employee he was relocating to Los Angeles from New York accepted into the Curtis School. Ovitz's latter effort was all the more impressive considering that he made it in mid-August, just weeks before the start of the school year and months after every place in the school had allegedly been filled.

Celebrity children do occasionally get rejected by their parents' favorite schools. Celebrity rejects include the children of Bruce Springsteen and of Ryan O'Neal and Farrah Fawcett. Glenn Close's daughter was rejected by CEE, but on a technicality: She missed the inviolable filing deadline. And one of Bob Dylan's sons was rejected at Crossroads. "He didn't even know his own name," said a former school official.

One erstwhile Los Angeles district attorney was not happy when his application at the Crossroads School was shot down. "He was astonished when I said we didn't have any openings and wouldn't make one," said a Crossroads official. "He asked me if I knew who he was."

The D.A. might have made a mistake contacting the admissions office directly. It's often wiser to ingratiate yourself with a member of the school's board. One of the

Illustration by C. F. Payne

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privileges of board membership—as potent a symbol of power in L.A. as being able to green-light a movie—is putting in the fix for your friends and business associates.

But even board membership has its limits. "We could easily fill the campus with board-recommended admits, but we have a commitment to racial and economic diversity," explained a Crossroads official, describing the "delicate dance" that must be performed with board members. For example, said an official at another school, if a board member recommends three or four applicants but there's only one opening left, "I'll call up the board member and say, 'I really need you to be clear with me. Is this someone you'd lie down on the tracks for?'"

When it's put to them that way, he said, board members can be surprisingly unsentimental. They'll throw to the wolves their niece or their law partner's son and direct the school to accept the child of the person who can order a midseason replacement.

Perhaps the most enduring myth about getting into kindergarten is that letters of recommendation from the rich and famous are important. Maybe they would be if the letter writers had ever met the family, let alone the child they're recommending. The late senator Jacob Javits was more forthcoming than most when he was moved to admit that one family on whose behalf he was writing were actually "friends of friends."

One of the perks of the Hollywood-Washington axis is that better Los Angeles schools are getting letters of recommendation from Clinton administration bigwigs, starting with Vice President Al Gore. But a letter from the veep or other famous recommenders may actually do more harm than good. Jake Jacobusse, the former head of Crossroads's upper school and now an education consultant in Cambridge, Massachusetts, said the "red flag" would pop up whenever he opened a folder full of letters from high rollers such as Ovitz and Spielberg, whom he identified as two of Hollywood's most prolific scribes. "I'd say, 'What are all these letters from people in the industry? What's wrong with this kid?'"

"The thicker the file, the thicker the kid," affirmed an L.A. headmaster.

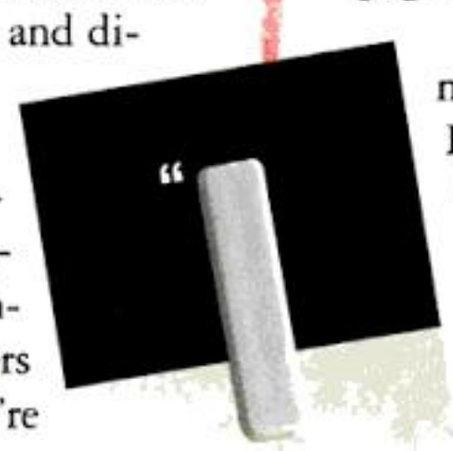
A family may visit a school several times during the application process. The first event is often a "parents' night" cattle call, such as the one held by John Thomas Dye, where, said one parent, school moms made the cookies, the headmaster "worked the room like Phil Donahue," and prospective parents came dressed in Brooks Brothers and Junior League "but with more makeup and jewelry [than in New York] because it's Hollywood."

The last and most important visit is the private interview the parents have with the admissions director. They come prepared. "They want to make sure you know how wonderful the child is, how wonderful they are, and they want us to know how wonderful we are," said Marcia Kopp, assistant head of school at the Wildwood School. "There are a lot of wonderful people who get rejected."

The school has some questions for the parents, too. Parents say they've been asked point-blank during the interview how much they're prepared to contribute to the school. Rumors abound that a place can be made available at the Center for Early Education for a contribution of around $50,000. The school dismisses such stories as sour grapes from rejected applicants.

Parents certainly aren't above offering if they think it will improve their odds. One school received a handsome coffee-table book from a family that was applying. When school officials opened it up, there was cash between the pages. "Of course, it was returned," said a source.

A Wildwood applicant said she was asked how much she was prepared to contribute. But Marcia Kopp said the parent misinterpreted the question. "The question," Kopp explained, "is 'How would you like to participate in the life of the school in terms of sharing your talents, interests and resources?' The answers range from 'I play the guitar' to 'We'll support your capital campaign.'"



Families learn whether their little ones are bound for glory in late March, when the acceptance and rejection letters get mailed. But even for the victors, the euphoria passes quickly as they discover—usually no later than the first kindergarten cocktail party—that movie-star parents won't hobnob with money managers.

And the requests for contributions don't stop. After their children were accepted into Curtis, one couple donated $6,000 to express their gratitude. Shortly afterward they received a call from somebody working on the annual fundraiser. "The woman said, 'Maybe you didn't know we have already given $6,000,'" reported a family friend. "They said, 'We know, but this is for the fundraiser.' She was just appalled."

"Once I was in, I had to work my butt off to prove I was a person," said a mother whose child attends Calmont, a supposedly laid-back academy for counterculture types. (Mary McDonnell, Lynn Redgrave and Pierce Brosnan are Calmont parents.) "The ordinary mothers are the ones who have to do a lot of the work, because everyone knows the stars are too busy. There's a hierarchy."

But the stars don't have it easy, either. They're the first ones the school turns to when there's a cash-flow crisis. "I called Streisand, and I said, 'I want to talk about you and Crossroads,'" recalls Jake Jacobusse, who educated Streisand's son, Jason. "She knew what was coming. There was a long pause, and she said, 'I'll write you a check for $5,000.' I didn't know her well enough to say, 'Add a zero, you twit.'"

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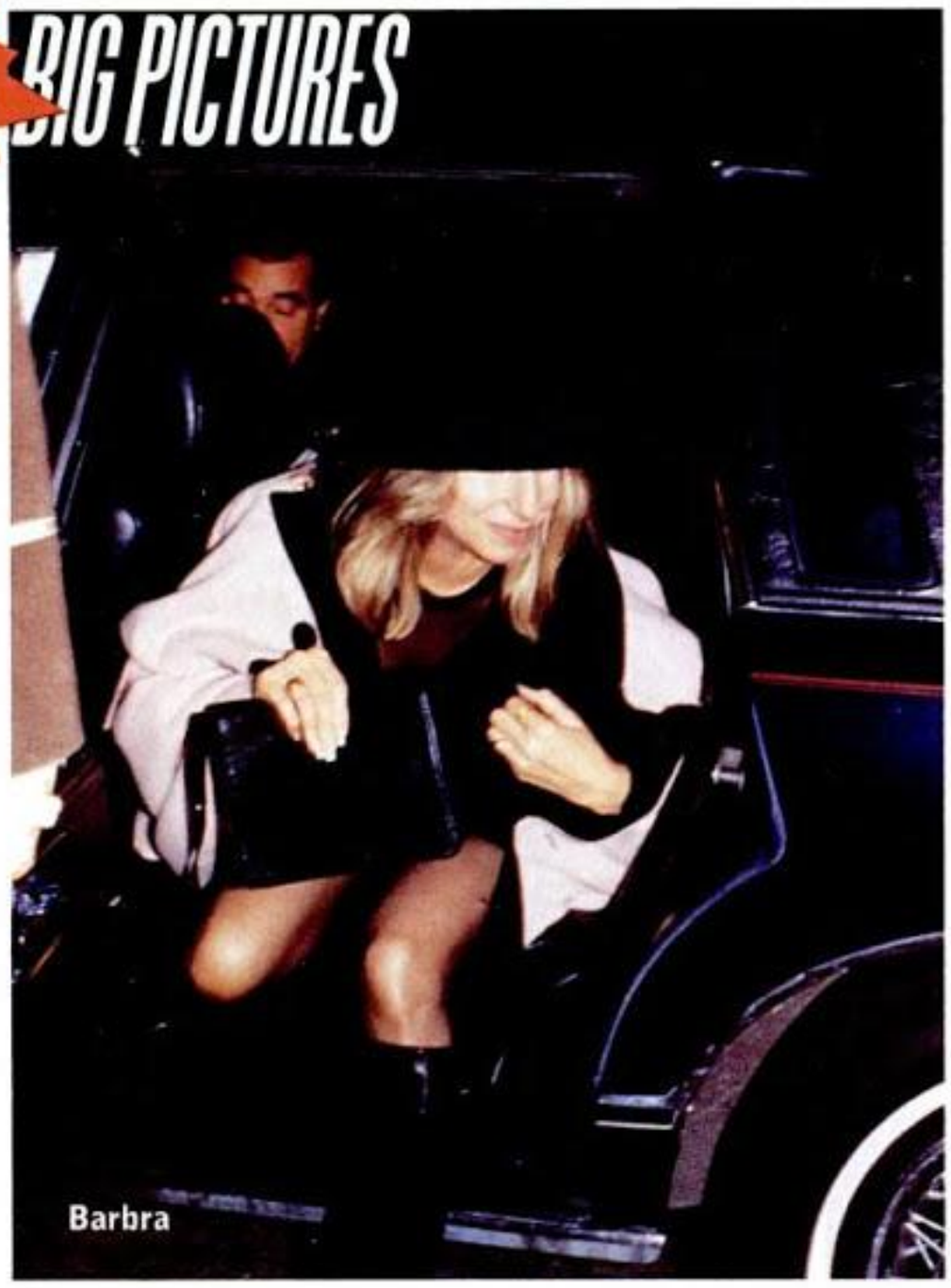
This month: *Chinese monks dine and dance; Ginger Rogers lights up the night; limelit limb hose alighting from limos.* **February 1994**



TAN ME HIDE WHEN I'M DEAD, FRED Ginger Rogers flashes her superglamorous décolletagé.

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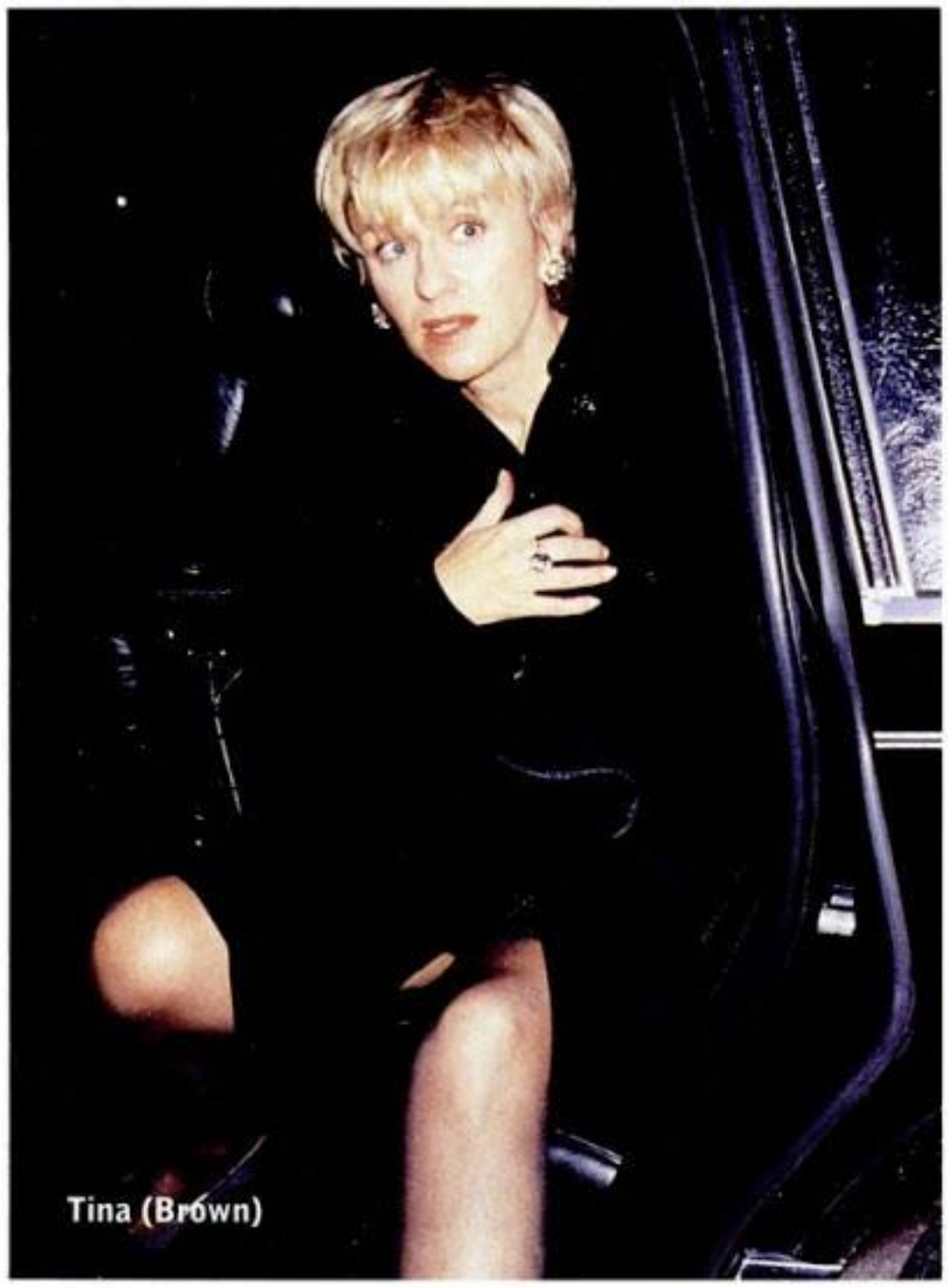


Barbra



Ivana

Working girls the world over agree: There is no dignified way to exit a limousine.

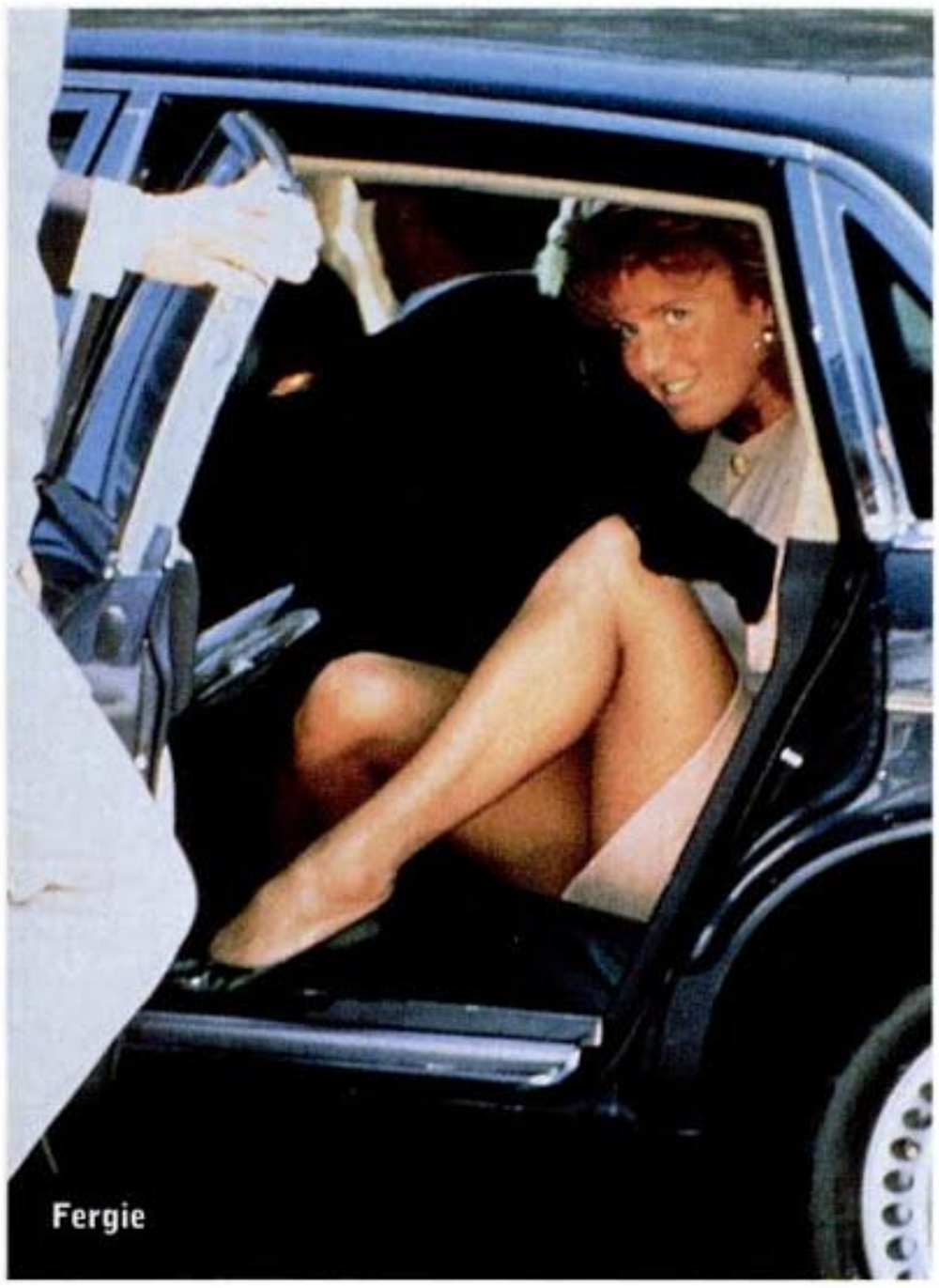


Tina (Brown)



Joan

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Fergie



Emily (Lloyd)



Di

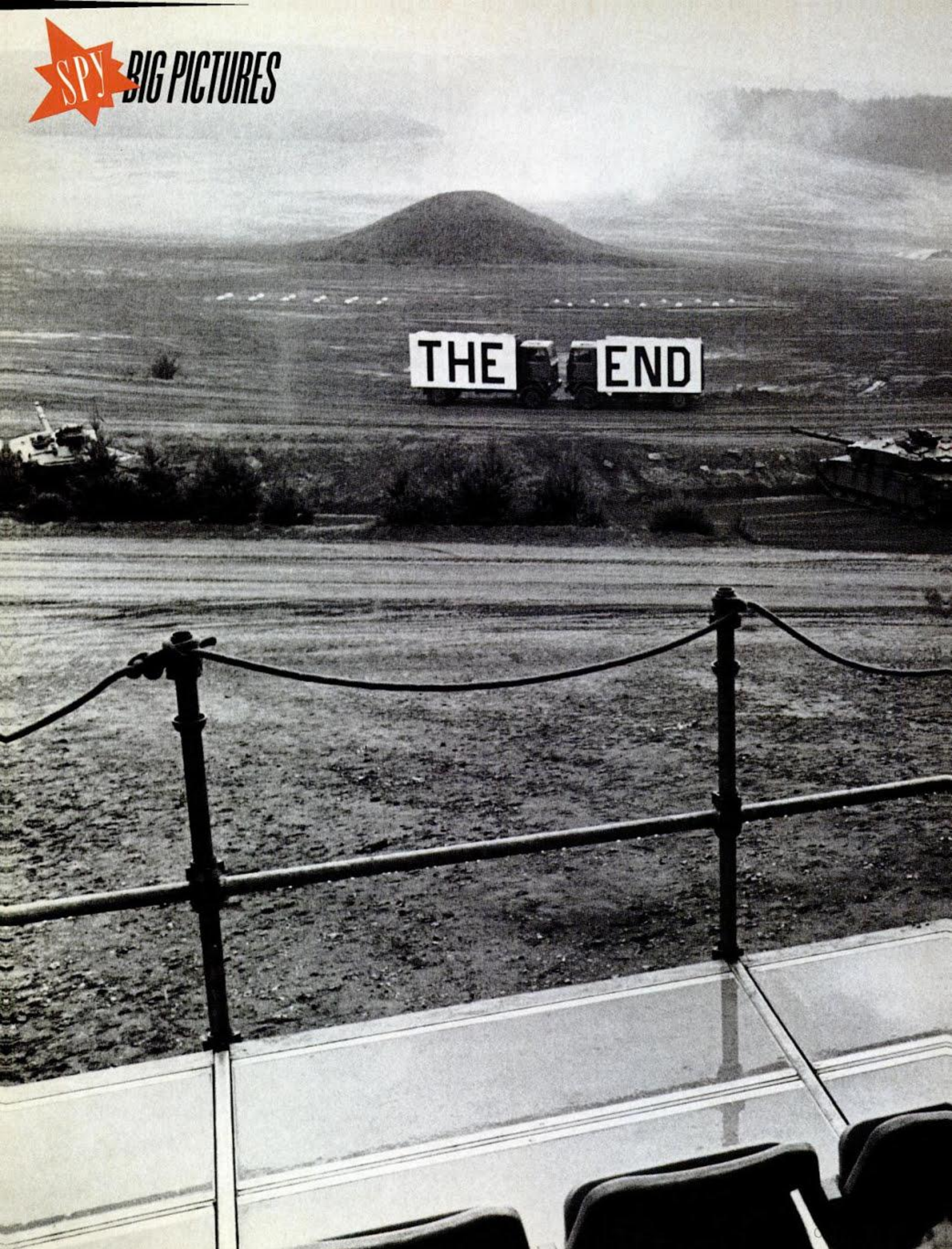
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Time-conscious Shao Lin monks simultaneously practice T'ai Chi and eat lunch.

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British military manœuvres
at Aldershot draw inexorably
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Victual Reality

How NC* Are You?

A New SPY Column About Food, Drink and Prudes

Reported by Evelyn Peterson

A significant American anniversary is passing, as this is written, without any fanfare or official acknowledgment. Sixty years ago, on December 5, 1933, the Twenty-first Amendment to the Constitution—which repealed the Eighteenth Amendment—was ratified by the requisite 36 states, and the U.S. rejoined the brotherhood of civilized nations.

SPY drinks. Casually. (We prefer *casually* to the wussy industry-approved term *moderately*; those of us who drink, drink when we feel like it and until we've had enough.) According to our razor-sharp, no-margin-of-error surveys, an overwhelming majority of our readers drink, too, and, we suspect, in the same un-wussy fashion.

And since SPY's readers are just as capable of scenting cultural shifts downwind as its editors are, they must know the unutterable shame of public drinking in the nineties. There's that uneasy silence that settles over almost every boozer-friendly social occasion when the waitron asks if it can bring something from the bar. Ordering a mere beer is a minefield. *Does he or doesn't he? What will she think of me? How many vegans are at this table?* There's the hypocritical chorus of "Evianperrierpellegrino," followed by the individual self-loathing that you haven't the guts to order even a *glass* of white, let alone the emerald-green, dew-sprinkled bottle of sun-soaked nectar you really want.

Whence this fog of priggery? An echo of the ancient sixties standoff between juicers and dopers? Conflict between the body's blameless natural desire for alcohol and its bondage to the internal-combustion engine? No. The shame, the guilt, the sense that to take a drink would be harmful not just to yourself but—bafflingly—to others is a tribute to the accelerating success of the neoprohibitionist movement.

Neoprobes are an eclectic lot. Post-socialist outfits like Public Citizen and the Center for Science in the Public Interest have no qualms about aligning themselves with fundamentalist Baptists or the prehensile clods at the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms to get the padlocks back on your pleasure chest. Busybodies will find one another whatever their politics.

These days the busybodies are busier than ever about our bodies. And while this is to be expected from the schoolyard bullies and teachers' pets of the right, it's truly reprehensible when it comes from traditional liberals. The very same people who successfully fought federal meddling in their bedrooms and wombs now want the government to regulate those other parts of our bodies they deem to be at risk. Choice is a good when applied to the uterus but an obstacle to the proper content of the digestive tract. The right to privacy extends to our privates but not, apparently, to our palates.

Of course, neoprobe hotbeds like CSPI and in particular its executive director, Michael Jacobson, loathe the label *neoprohibitionist*. They know what the rum-and-Romanism crowd who gave prohibition its first boost were really up to. And they're nothing like that, not at all, no way. These are progressives who want—according to CSPI's manifesto—"to help consumers recognize that beer, wine, and liquor cause major health and social problems and are not the elixirs of happiness depicted in ads."

The arrogance and distortion in this apparently well-meaning statement of principles sum up the extremist side of a debate that has roiled the wine-and-alcoholic-beverage world for several years but is relatively unknown to the casual drinker. Be warned. The neoprobe threat is real. Jacobson may not weigh as much as Carrie Nation did, but he is her exact reincarnation 100 years on. Nothing he proposes will *help* consumers. He is out to *make* them do what he thinks they ought, by hugely increased excise taxes, radically reduced availability and Draconian restrictions on information and advertising. In a word, prohibition. You cannot be trusted to use alcohol responsibly, so Carrie Jacobson is going to lock it in the parlor and keep the key in his bodice.

Within a Beltway paved with good intentions, this kind of posturing goes down very nicely. The current surgeon general, Joycelyn Elders, as well as Donna Shalala and the first lady, is receptive to Jacobson's brand of latter-day Babbittry. Not surprising that the queen of upwardly mobile social tinkerers, Barbra Streisand, is a major contributor to CSPI.

The media (with the laudable exception of *60 Minutes*) have largely bought into the scapegoating of alcohol as a "health and social problem." From the daytime sob shows to late-night chat, alcohol use is being installed in the canon of cardinal sins

*Nutritionally Correct

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that explain the dreadful state we're in, just below drugs and just above child abuse. The neoprobes' deliberate confusion of alcohol use with alcohol abuse plays well in a sound bite, and its deeper puritanical motivation need not be investigated. (To be fair, some on the bandwagon may not be motivated just by puritanism; neoprobe representative Joseph Kennedy II [D-Mass.] is no doubt driven by the guilty knowledge that he ultimately owes his congressional seat to Prohibition's number one bootlegger, his grandfather.)

The refusal to distinguish between use and abuse is, of course, as old as the temperance movement. Jacobson's relentless insistence on lumping them together is the clearest evidence that what drives him is not any desire for social improvement but prudery pure and simple, the fear and hatred of pleasure. The alliance between Jacobson and the likes of Strom Thurmond (another vocal neoprobe) is in no way a political marriage of convenience. The personal dynamic of both is intolerance. They're soulmates, brothers beneath the political skin, right-wingers to the core.

Use-abuse confusion is central to every item on CSPI's anti-alcohol agenda. It's behind the sense of undress the casual drinker feels in public and the pack of lies the government has slapped on our bottles. Health, however, is the one area in which Jacobson and CSPI have been most obviously exposed as frauds. Medical evidence (notably a now-famous ongoing Harvard study on heart disease) is becoming incontestable that normal alcohol use—a daily intake of two to three drinks (e.g., glasses of wine or bottles of beer)—is not only harmless but, especially in the case of wine, actively good for you.

Scientific evidence cuts no ice with scientists like Jacobson, though, who continues to insist that alcoholic bev-



Carrie Jacobson, mother of neoprobition

Illustration by David Plunkert

The right to privacy extends to our privates but not, apparently, to our palates

erages cause "over 100,000 deaths annually, which cost our society far more than all illegal drugs combined." Whatever microscopic element of truth there is in such drivel refers as usual to alcohol *abuse*—the behavior of the 10 percent or so of alcohol users who can't be trusted with the stuff: drunks who kill themselves or other people with cars, guns, knives, chain saws, hat pins, frozen hams or whatever comes to hand. For their sins, the 90 percent who live less stressful, healthier lives because they use alcohol are to be punished.

Neoprobes like to refer to this process with the ominous coinage *consumption control*.

The trouble with consumption control is that it doesn't work. It stigmatizes casual users while doing nothing for alcoholics. Take blacks. Blacks' alcohol consumption is lower per capita than that of whites, but blacks have more alcohol-related problems. In other words, there is no correlation between overall consumption and alcohol abuse.

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Much the same is true of FAS (fetal alcohol syndrome). FAS is a big gun for CSPI. The warning label it encouraged the government to place on all containers of beer, wine and liquor gives it pride of place (ACCORDING TO THE SURGEON GENERAL, WOMEN SHOULD NOT DRINK ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES DURING PREGNANCY BECAUSE OF THE RISK OF BIRTH DEFECTS). Unfortunately, this is a flat lie. In *Alcohol and the Fetus* by Henry Rosett and Lyn Weiner, the definitive book on FAS, we read, "The recommendation that all women should abstain from drinking during pregnancy is not based on scientific evidence, since no risks have been observed from consumption of small quantities." And once again the people most at risk are not helped by CSPI's indiscriminate campaign. "Drinking by pregnant women is down, but FAS is not," says Weiner, who's also director of the Fetal Alcohol Education Program at Boston University.

This too is science—science, moreover, in the public interest—but the public, however interested, is unlikely to be aware of it.

Generally speaking, the press has given Jacobson a free ride. (An October 27 profile in *The Washington Post* described him as "soft-spoken and gentle, the type who probably never steps on ants. He's a nice guy.") The reason? He spends a great deal of his time alternately courting and guilting out the media. A big chunk of CSPI's anti-alcohol agenda concerns the restriction of advertising—on billboards in the inner city, for example. (The documentation of "excessive alcohol marketing" to blacks is, in one CSPI publicity still, two black kids walking beside a Miller beer truck.) The notion that consumers—especially blacks—are too gullible to react responsibly to advertising is paternalism of the most repulsively illiberal kind, but who cares when it gets so much media attention?

Jacobson also likes to cast himself and CSPI in a David-vs.-Goliath role, a typical distortion. Especially given the current atmosphere in bureaucratic Washington, his allies are large and powerful. (The ATF, for one—hardly a plucky young Israelite with a slingshot.) CSPI's crude advocacy as a result hurts the little guy, the real Davids of the world, while merely embarrassing the Goliaths. Jacobson's assault on alcohol can be met by megabrewers like Anheuser-Busch but is murdering wine producers. Whatever their post–*Falcon Crest* image, the vast majority of wine producers are small businesspeople, farmers, in effect, with the usual enormous individual investment in land and stock. Woe betide any of them who breathes a word about the health benefits of his product. The class sneaks at CSPI alert the hall monitors at the ATF, and the grape guys get crushed. Recently a wine shop in San Francisco called Draper & Esquin created a heart-shaped button carrying the legend HAVE YOU HAD YOUR GLASS OF RED WINE TODAY? The ATF went ballistic and tried to get the button removed from circulation on the grounds that it violated ATF rules forbidding health claims for wine.

The personal dynamic of both Michael Jacobson and Strom Thurmond is intolerance. They're soulmates beneath the political skin, right-wingers to the core.

Headline addict Jacobson scored big last November with a CSPI study purporting to show that Chinese restaurants serve food higher in fat than ordinary consumers might suppose. (He's currently working on another, due in January, which will draw similar scientifically preconceived conclusions about Italian food.) The Chinese community was understandably outraged by the study's veiled xenophobia and because—at least in the crude sound-bite way in which it was promoted—it stigmatized *all* Chinese cooking. (The cuisines of China are, of course, at least as ancient, varied and magnificent as those of France and as a whole use far less animal fat.)

The episode was instructive. Far better than his cretinous assault on noble traditions like the making and drinking of wine, it exposed Jacobson as a cultural lout. And it revealed more clearly than any previous CSPI enterprise just what he's up to.

Consumers were not informed by his study so much as scared and confused, just as they will be by the Italian one (and the Tex-Mex one and the soul-food one and the Indian one, etc., etc., ad nauseam). Chefs and restaurateurs—small businessmen all—were smeared and maligned with little chance of rebuttal. And the study, with its attendant publicity, was conducted in a tone of high moral indignation, holding consumers and producers alike to some mysterious standard known only to the illuminati of CSPI.

Sound familiar? Of course it does. What we have here is a nutritional version of political correctness. PC paints those who don't talk and think a certain arbitrary way as human dreck who are not simply wrong but morally inferior. Ditto nutritional correctness. Those who don't eat and drink in a certain equally narrow and cranky manner are ignorant, irresponsible scum at whose door the blame for solid problems can be laid.

Unlike political correctness, however, whose concrete manifestations touch ordinary folks only tangentially, nutritional correctness affects what all of us must do at least once or twice a day to stay alive. And unlike political correctness, which has been quite properly hunted down, punched out and stomped into a puddle of ineffectual cliché, nutritional correctness holds pride of place in the media, in the Clinton administration and, alas, in an alarming number of kitchens.

Not anymore. We say it's spinach, and we say the hell with it.

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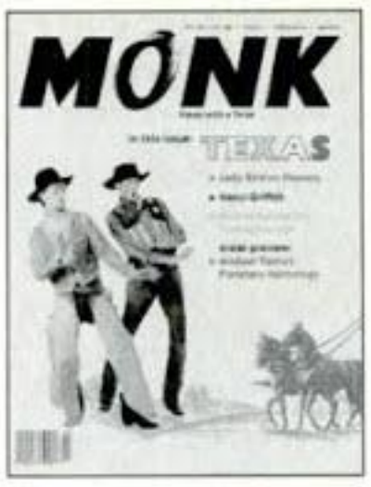
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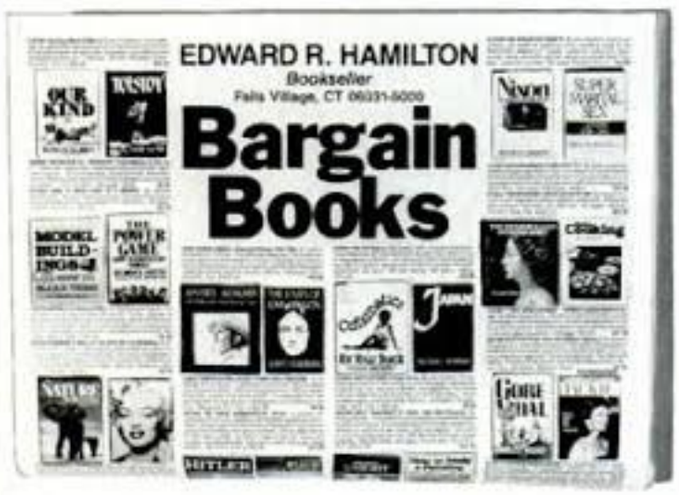
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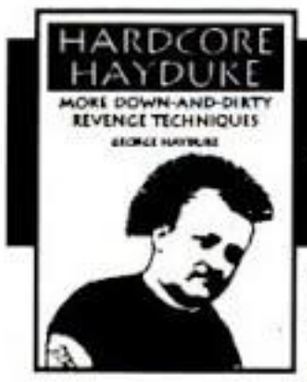
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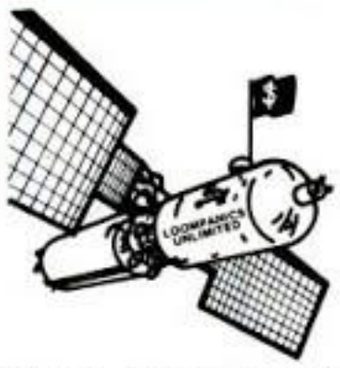
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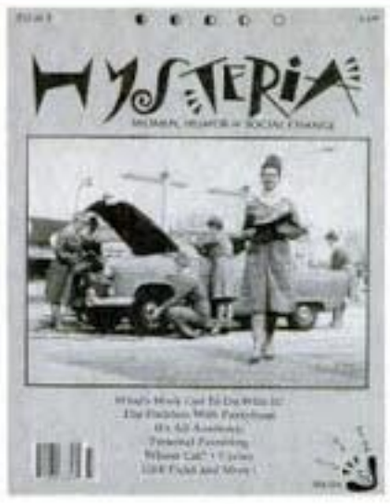
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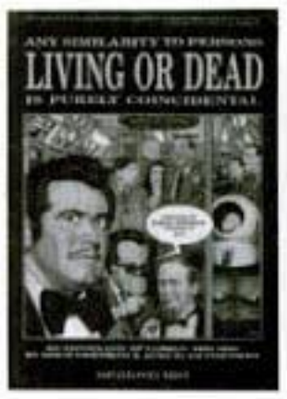
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Internettled

Readin' 'n' Writhin' On-Line

by Ellis Weiner

What is the nature of human consciousness, the function of the self, the dynamic of cognition? How the hell should I know? But, like every other citizen with a Weltanschauung and a cup of coffee, I have my theories. Feel free to deride them at your convenience. Simply jack into the Internet, jump over to *alt.consciousness* and join me and the other Netniks™ in a slo-mo, silent chatfest about mind vs. brain, the awareness of plants, the intelligence of rocks and oh so much more.

You'll see it all: biting attack and dogged defense, earthy ridicule and lofty dismissal. Some participants are astute and articulate; some have the awareness of plants and the intelligence of rocks. But who cares? We're expressing ourselves!

And we're doing it about everything from the history of bossa nova to the perfidy of Scientology to "issues pertaining to Volkswagen products." These subjects, and over a jillion others, are discussed in thousands of groups that compose the Net feature irritatingly called Usenet. It sounds like an off-price European brand of hair spray, but the irony is that after a few hours of wandering its endless labyrinths, squinting at cuneiform HELP menus and following the "thread" of a 3- or 4- or, indeed, 20-part exchange in *sci.nanotech* (which the Usenet index says deals with "self-reproducing molecular-scale machines") or *rec.arts.marching.misc* ("marching-related performance activities"), you won't need hair spray, or even hair itself.

In what is certainly the final revenge of the nerd, Usenet renders coiffure, wardrobe, good looks and elementary hygiene irrelevant. Sooner or later you find something of interest, and you never get up from the keyboard again.

This, for once, *is* "progress." Why fret over the indignity, expense and sheer bodily peril of a social, sex, night- or any other kind of life when you can find, in the comfort and convenience of your own computer, a group of strangers from around the world ready—no, eager—to talk about everything and nothing?

Not that you need actually say anything; it is perfectly acceptable to simply "lurk," perusing other people's discussions until your eyeballs fall out. But why not start a yakathon about your own silly "interests"? Simply ask yourself, "What question or statement of maniacal specificity have I always wanted but until now despaired of having a chance to address to a qualified expert, inspired amateur or pompously posturing, Captain Picard–quoting numskull?" Then make your way to the appropriate group, where you will find screen after screen of brief descriptions of "postings." These little headlines often form a sort of electronic-village folk poetry. For example, this, from *alt.best.of.internet*:

1. Orange juice scam (5 msgs)
2. Useful information? (4 msgs)
3. I want _happenings_ please (3 msgs)
4. Teak eating pest
5. Ballistic properties of spit (8 msgs)
6. wierd [*sic*] things sometimes happen in San Francisco (3 msgs)

Innocuous and polite on the surface, yes, but underneath is often a tumult of argument, sarcasm and insult. A recent exchange was typical. I had just left the creationism-vs.-evolution debate in *talk.origins*—

20. A few questions (65 msgs)
21. Dinosaurs, origins, and faith (was: Re: Hot sex and Candlewax) (8 msgs)
22. ATTENTION CREATIONISTS!!!!! (4 msgs)
23. Irrevalent [*sic*] Beer Thread (was Re: Attent) (27 msgs)
24. Replenishing (was Re: Noah's Ark question) (29 msgs)
25. Islam and Darwinism...

—and bopped into *rec.arts.books*, where I saw "Red Barber Worship: A Dissenting View." (Barber, one of the grand old men of sports announcing, had recently died; he had been interviewed every Friday morning for years on National Public Radio by Bob Edwards, whose reminiscence of their relationship had just been published. NPR was offering the book, in tones of hushed reverence, as a fundraiser pledge bonus.) A person called YOX asked, "Am I crazy, or is all this piety about Red Barber getting out of hand?" He (or she) went on to allow as how Red's comments in those interviews had been less than electrifying. The thread evolved thus over several weeks:

One woman ("Sandra") replied, "You're crazy." But a guy—call him Tim—agreed with YOX, noting, "Red Barber may have been a charmingly senile man, but he was a very poor radio commentator." Then another person panted in agreement, "Thank you, thank you, for letting me know I wasn't alone. I used to cringe every time this feature came on."

Thus far, fairly convivial. But Sandra shot back, denouncing all of the above for not knowing anything about Red, and saying that "charmingly senile" was "an ignorant statement." She then loosed a five-paragraph defense of Red ("...he had the presense [*sic*] of mind to carry on the pleasantries of a conversation, recall a wealth of history from his excellent memory..."). Tim answered this with some asperity: "I have a lower tolerence for meandering claptrap than you." Then "Paul" weighed in defending Sandra ("Bob Edwards's book about Red is as warm and moving a tribute as I can imagine"). Tim volleyed back that the thread was about Red's commentaries, not the book; Sandra then challenged Tim with "Just what are *your* broadcasting credentials...?" This was criticized by mute, sneaky YOX him/herself, who ended by agreeing with Tim, who had, of course, entered the thread by agreeing with YOX in the first place.

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This was classic Usenet: picayune, huffy, overwritten, pedantic, showoffy, digressive, a cross between a late-night dorm bull session and the Talmud—and worthless, if you have no interest in the subject at hand.

When I first ventured into Usenet, I'd intended to keep my own postings to a minimum; I wanted to provoke and then observe. So I posted (in *alt.consciousness*) what I thought was an outrageous hypothesis, then sat back to let the replies come crashing in. Meanwhile, to kill time, I read a flamboyant posting (from Germany) that concluded with "I say consciousness is not existing and I want you to prove me if I am not right!" Then, as one does, I sent off a breezy little retort ("...much nonsense...you're merely being provocative...the fallacy of Cogito ergo sum is, obviously," etc., etc.).

A day or two later, this brought action. One person agreed with me; another lectured me at length about the consciousness of individual cells. And then I did what everyone does, what the Net makes it so easy to do: I *replied* to these replies. This elicited, the next day, a lofty discourse (fake-friendly, condescending) on the Buddhist notion of mind, awareness, etc., by a guy who—get this—called me "naive"! Naturally I had no recourse but to bang out a thousand-word retort and E-mail it off while the keyboard was still smoking.

Satisfying? Hell, yes. And it worked. He apologized. I made nice. Perhaps we'll continue this perfectly delightful exchange for years to come, if not in this group, then in some other—*comp.soft-sys.shazam*, perhaps ("the SHAZAM econometrics computer"), or *alt.barney.dinosaur.die.die.die*.

In any case, I'll be "there," where the stifled questions and covert obsessions and secret opinions of a lifetime can breathe free and proclaim themselves in the pure light of the cathode ray tube. By day I have to force myself not to dash in for a brief scan and, instead, concentrate on work. When I log on at night now, my screen reads, YOU HAVE 2 NEW MAIL MESSAGES, and I think, *Only two?*

UN-BRITISH CROSSWORD ANSWERS



ACROSS 1. Nobody ever pronounces *Chico Marx* the way the boys themselves pronounced it. It was Chick-o, because he was so good with the chicks. "Good with the chicks"! I can't believe that came out of my mouth! In this day and age! What I mean is, Leonard "Chico" Marx evidently chased a lot of women around off-camera in an utterly irresponsible way and they liked it—a number of them liked it—up to a certain point, back then. In *Duck Soup* his character is referred to as, phonetically, Chickolini. The *town* of Chico is pronounced as you would expect Chico to be pronounced. It is a processing and packing center in an almond-growing region. An almond-growing region! I mean, you come into California from anyplace else in America and you say, "So, what's so special about California?" and they say, "Well, we have an almond-growing region." No *wonder* the movies came into their own in this state. Let us just thank God they didn't come into their own in, like, Connecticut. They're close enough to being like an industry that would come into its own in Connecticut as it is. **4.** The story by Mark Twain. **9.** Oakland A's, of course. You can't put an apostrophe in a puzzle, but that doesn't stop this puzzle from acting as if you can. You want some kind of tight-ass East Coast puzzle? **11.** I don't know how this southern California town got its name. But I'll say this, it's a town name that sticks in your mind. As do these California town names that I did not manage to get into this puzzle: Needles (kids in town), Coachella (left-out anus catches hell), Otay (town where Buckwheat says, "All right"). **14.** Rearranging ("shredding") *pants* around *L.A.* after *P.E.* ("gym") before *L* (Roman numeral for 50). Tricky little dance there, I suppose, but you're up to it. **22.** Japanese, right? Pretty good movie. Japanese-financed movie *about Japan*. Noodles. Nothing wrong with that. On the other hand, a Japanese-financed movie about Pearl Harbor—hey, I'm just thinking out loud. Which I guess is an Occidental kind of thing to do. If we start having noodle westerns, also known as sushi-'em-ups, then we'll know that Japan owns our fantasy life. The French are worried that theirs is being taken over by Hollywood; see how they like it when Gerard Depardieu starts eating snails and frogs' legs *raw*. Incidentally, I had an Italian American cabdriver the other night whose day job is teaching high school Italian. I asked him whether his best students were Italian Americans. *Nah*, he said, *Asians*. The next time you see a Marx Brothers movie, Chico by means of some new morphing process may have been Nipponized. **27.** LA—not L.A.—means Louisiana. New Iberia is where Tabasco sauce comes from, as it says clearly on the label. "Fresh" is *new*, "one" is *I*, added to *be*, *R* for *right*, another *I* and *a*, the head of *air*. Hey, this is only the second really explanatory note so far, isn't it? Maybe this puzzle is growing up. Years ago, people frequently made a point of telling me they couldn't work this puzzle. Now people are more likely to say, "I don't know where all those people come off who say they can't work this puzzle." And we have our treasured individual workers of it, for instance Kirkpatrick Sale, author most recently of an uncompromising denunciation of Christopher Columbus as imperialist. You have to wonder, though, about a puzzle that is reduced to saluting individuals who can solve it. Particularly an individual who, the last time I saw him, wondered if I had a copy of the puzzle on me—a copy, in other words, that he would not have to pay for. **29.** The Eagles are an ex-act.

DOWN 1. In California—and not in Disneyland, either—there actually is a range called the Chocolate Mountains. What can I tell you. I guess it's not any more inner-childish than the Smokies or the Rockies, and yet.... **3.** An *ell* is a measure. **4.** *OD* in *CA*. **7.** Another anagram for Rice-A-Roni is *ironic ear*. **18.** When we say, "Crazy L.A. nuts be," we're saying, "Rearrange *L.A. nuts be*." That's all I'm going to tell you. You're an adult, and—just, let's leave it at that. **21.** Give me credit: I got Lompoc in. I didn't get Truckee in. (*Truckee*! Isn't that a great name for a town? Are there truck stops in Truckee, and are the waitresses in them always saying, "Right, right, I know, you are the truck*er* and I must be the truck*ee*, forget it, buster"?) But I did get in Lompoc. **22.** Storm-tossed *coast*, that is. **24.** *Normal* without the last letter. That's a heck of a note to end on. So let's end it like this: *Sunset Boulevard*. That's the movie that Norma Desmond is in, of course (played by Gloria Swanson, who was sort of John "New Frontier" Kennedy's undercover stepmother), but it's also the road that goes out to the end of America. Will Rogers's ranch is out there where the old American frontier ended. Where the frontier is now, who knows? Space seems to be drying up. We're out of it here. Sayonara.

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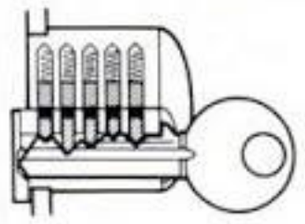

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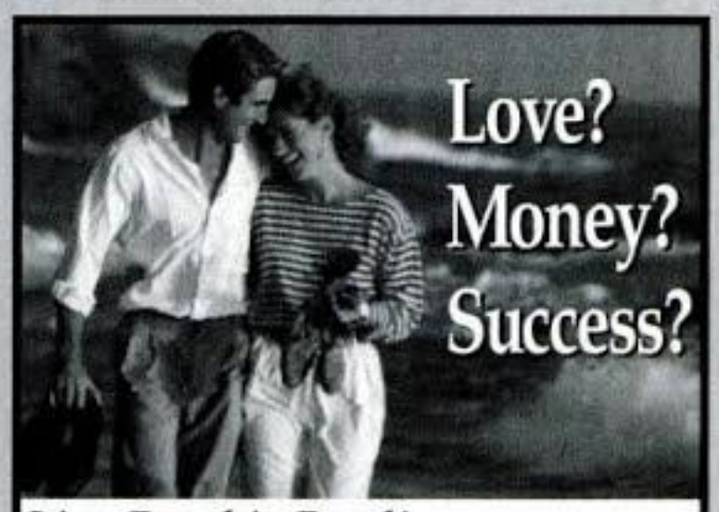
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The Un-British Crossword Puzzle

State of Insanity!

Are These People Out in California for Real, or What?

by Roy Blount Jr.

California, the golden dream—ha! No one has flown me out there in a year and a half. Too busy, probably, flying, like, Howard Stern out there! So what am I, a dog turd on the street?

Hey, California, who needs it? Darryl Strawberry went out there, his back *and* his attitude got *worse*.

I see this story in the *L.A. Times*. Local issues voted on recently in California:

- Can a San Francisco cop carry his puppet, named (are you ready?) Brendan O'Smarty, around with him on patrol? (Yes.)
- Should some kid who is a high school senior be on the Mill Valley school board? (No.)
- Should city workers in San Francisco ride the bus at least twice a week? (Yes.)
- Should San Francisco cabdrivers have a dress code? (No.)

New York should have such problems!

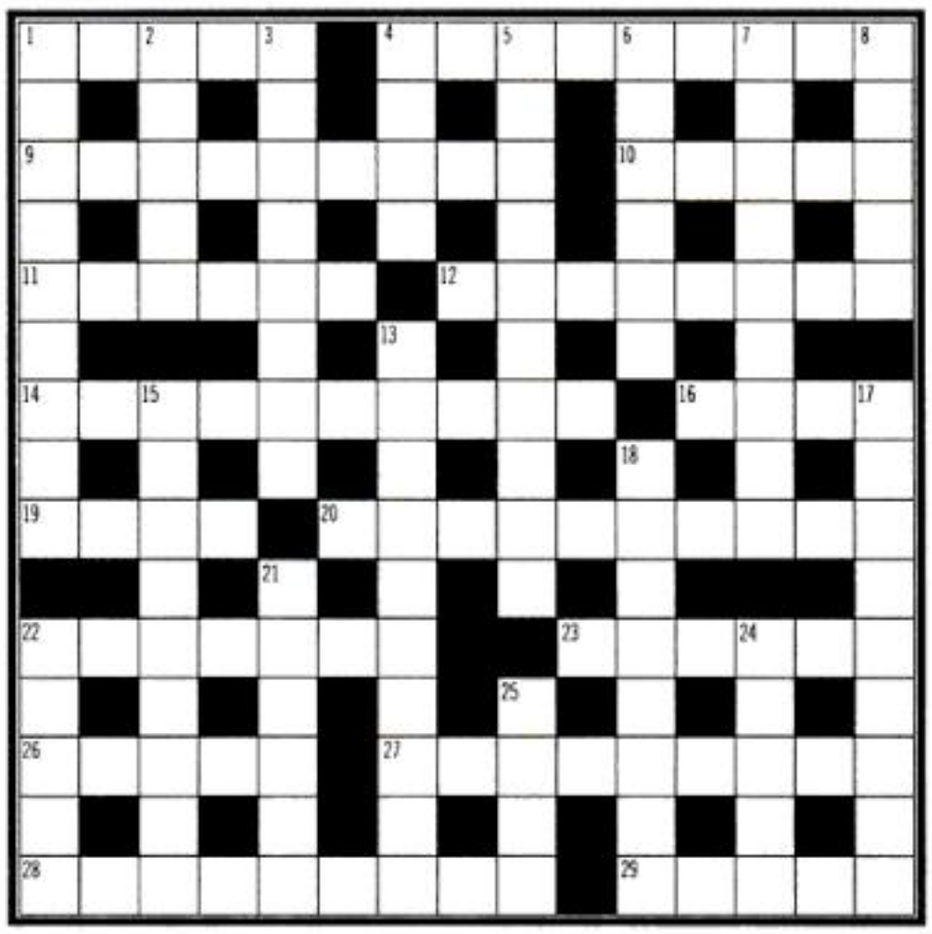
You notice all these weirdo issues arose in the Bay Area and were in the L.A. paper. In the San Francisco papers it was probably vice versa. Northern Californians hate it if you call them "Californians," because this lumps them in with *southern* Californians. Tough. Everybody out there in that wacko state should be happy people call them anything but kooks.

This is a state with earthquakes, riots, copycat forest-beach-house fires, street-violence videos that we all have to watch over and over until we feel crazy and then the jurors in these cases come on TV and destroy our faith in the jury system. Stand by for footage: a cop beating somebody up with a puppet.

And *this* state is worried about what cabdrivers ought to wear? Give me a break.

I ask a New York cabbie what he thinks of California, here's what he says: "We ought to fucking withdraw recognition! I'm serious!"

Cabbie is wearing, like, his father's Brooklyn Dodgers cap or a burnoose. I see Joe Pesci, or I could see Wesley Snipes. Geena Davis, Annabella Sciorra jumps in the cab, right? Crying. Says, "Follow that car." Chase all the way the hell to L.A.! Or San Francisco. Could be a bus, hijacked. He's got a puppet. She's got a puppet. Whatever.



ACROSS

1. Town of Italian Marx. (5)
4. Frog-jump county garners state, city wild raves. (9)
9. Club from hardwood country getting top marks. (7,2)
10. California love sound muddled by drink. (5)
11. Draft animal not applicable to road in town. (6)
12. Southern California lands resettled by disgraceful stories. (8)
14. Shredding pants around L.A. after gym—at 50, they're appealing. (10)
16. Traveler's lounge. (4)
19. Nobleman drives L.A. about wild. (4)
20. I find L.A. Zen somehow to neutralize a country. (10)
22. Noodle movie from west of Hollywood. (7)
23. Makeup person smears no tear. (6)
26. Fruits processed in depression. (5)
27. LA hot-sauce place—fresh one to be right one, airhead. (3,6)
28. Despots who rule the freeway? (9)
29. Demand the Eagles! (5)

DOWN

1. See 10 for California mountains. (9)
2. Finish drawing in family. (3,2)
3. S.F. street made of a railroad measure. (8)
4. Final passage: go the way of Belushi in California. (4)
5. "Let's do *Heaven's Gate* again,/ This time in Seattle—/ More romantic this time, and/ Upbeat, and ____ _____." (4,6)
6. Virginia is unable to give, like, the stereotypical surfer's stare. (6)
7. The San Francisco treat—ground carrion, i.e. (9)
8. Hollywood lights sailor amidship. (5)
13. State this puzzle's theme. (10)
15. Supreme studio. (9)
17. What L.A. police do is what actors do, around about. (9)
18. Crazy L.A. nuts be fickle. (8)
21. Coming up afternoon in hip, stuck-up town. (6)
22. Opera of storm-tossed shore. (5)
24. Ms. Desmond is almost typical. (5)
25. Sound to take advantage of flocking females? (4)

Answers appear on page 69.

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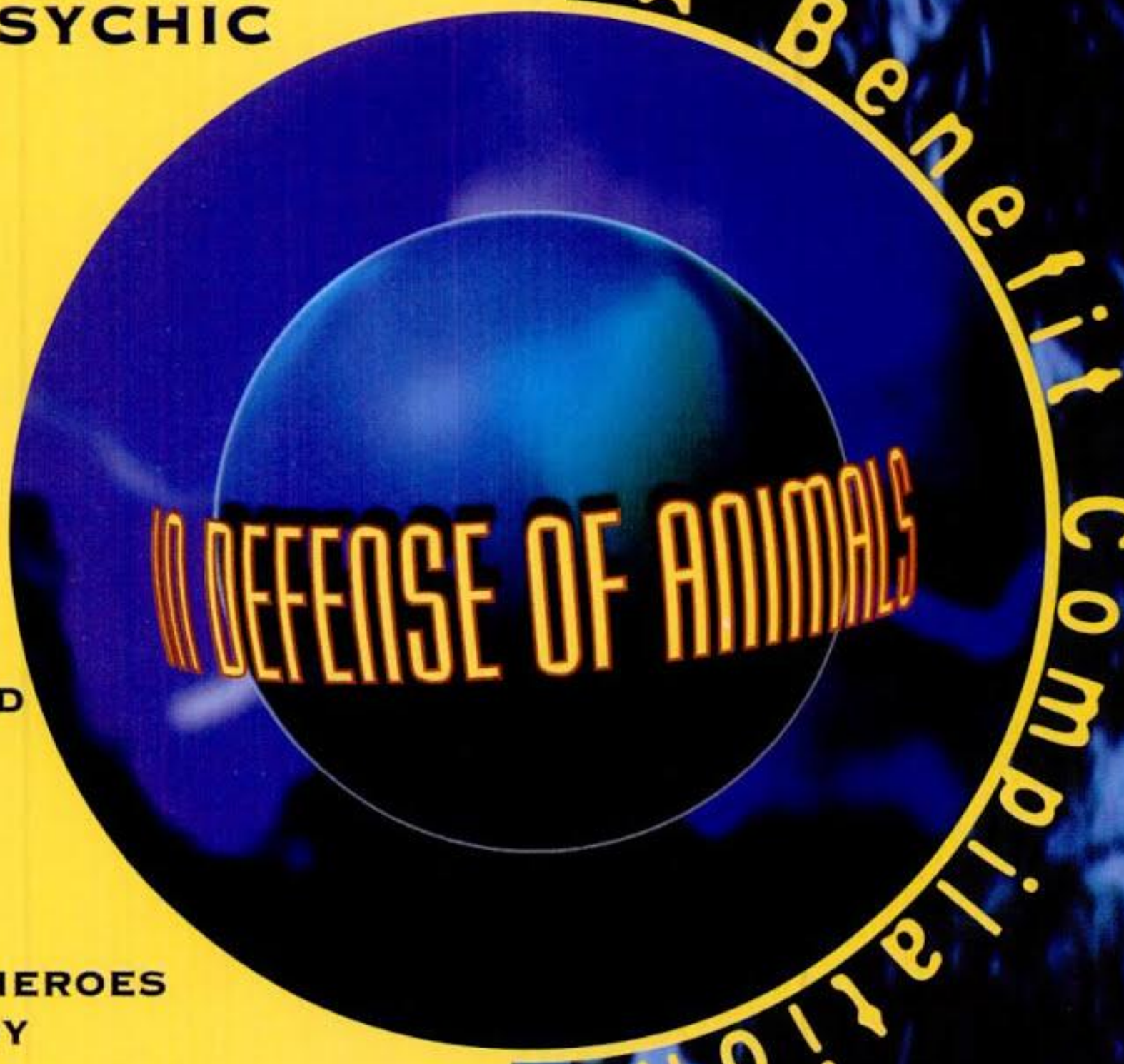
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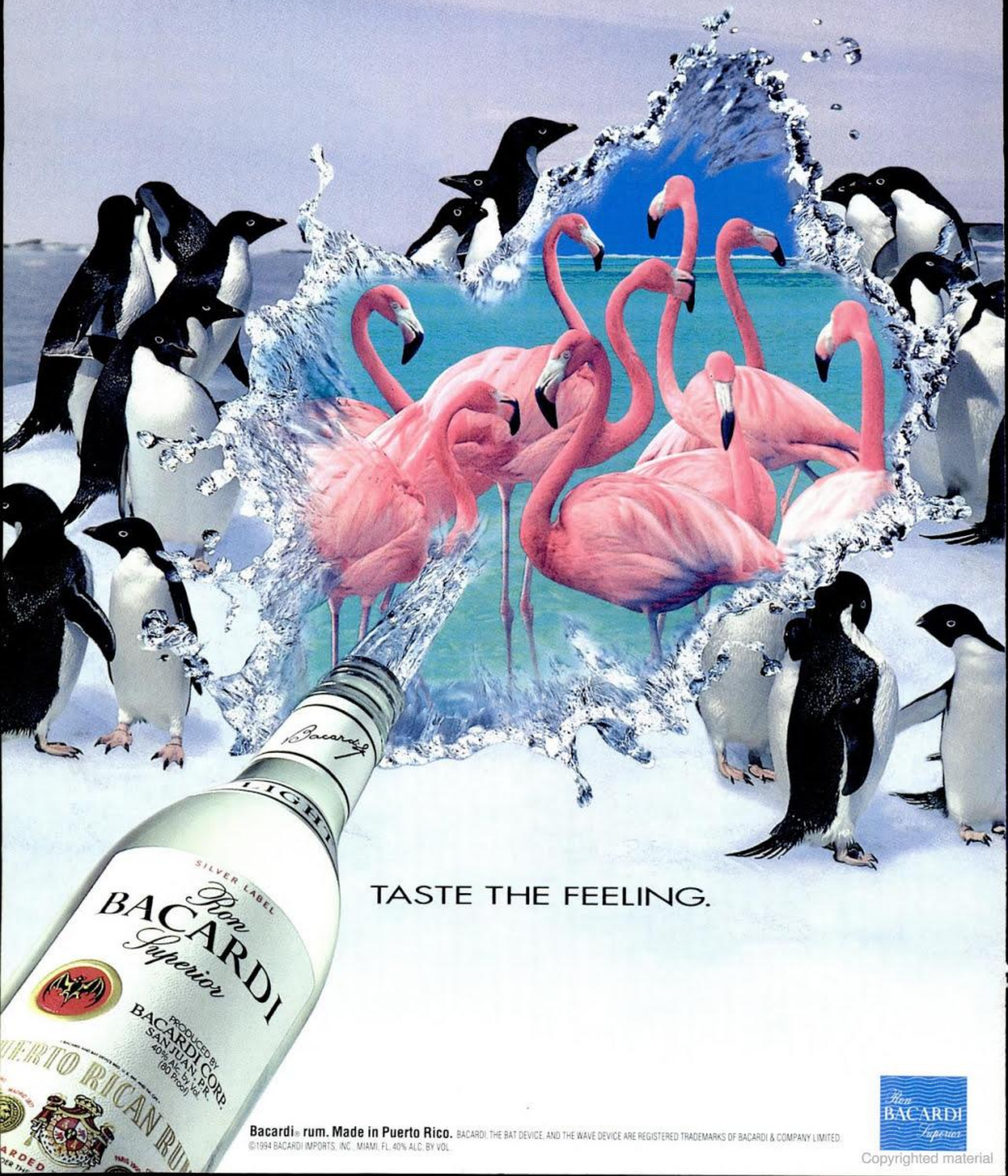
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